"You shouldn't be here Lance. Those Galra will be back any second now." Keith grunted and shook his head.

Lance ignored him. "Can you walk?" He asked.

Keith stared at Lance defiantly. Why was he being so stubborn?

"No." His tone sounded defeated and he stared at the ground for a moment before continuing, as if he didn't want to believe what he was saying. "I- I can't feel my legs."

"What..?"

- 

Or in other words. Keith sustains severe spinal injuries during a battle and is told that he may never walk again.

Notes

Hi, so this is my first Voltron fic! I've been in Klance hell for so long that I just had to contribute. Hope you like this fic, I tried my best :)

Just for reference, this is set somewhere between season 1 and 2
See the end of the work for more notes.
Chapter 1

Keith felt the nervous energy twitching in his fingers as he shifted the steering rod in his lion. The giant space cat manoeuvred quickly through a hailstorm of lasers, dodging with ease under his guidance. How the Galra had spotted them already was mind boggling to Keith. Even though Allura had warned them to be on guard today, none of the paladins had expected them to detect the lions so easily. He pulled hard to the right, barely dodging another barrage of bullets.

"This isn't working. We have to split up." Shiro's voice cut through the silence of the coms. Shiro was right, if they split up now it would draw the fire away so that Keith and Lance could hopefully enter unscathed. Unfortunately, that meant no cover when he and Lance exited their lions. "Pidge, Hunk, you guys follow me. Keith and Lance, stick to the plan. We'll distract them for as long as we can."

"Got it." Keith replied, which was followed by a confident "No worries." From Lance. The pair pulled away from the others and Keith searched for a big enough surface to land while Lance fired at the oncoming enemy spacecrafts. There was a tight space just ahead of them, next to some kind of vent on the Warcraft. He switched the coms so that only Lance could hear him. "Lance, see that vent, straight ahead?"

"Hmmm, seems like a tight fit." Lance was in his ear immediately. "You think we can land both of the lions there?"

"Unless you've got a better idea, I say we go for it." Keith grunted with the effort as he fired his heat ray at a group of spacecrafts. They disappeared in an explosion of fire and Keith flew straight through them.

"Vent it is then." Lance murmured. The blue lion weaved through the remaining debris of destroyed enemy crafts and Keith followed quickly behind.

Once they'd landed, the lions barely fitting on the platform, the pair dismounted and made their way toward the huge vent. Lance peered through the gaps in the vent before turning to face him. "Looks like there's some kind of hallway through there but I don't know where it leads. Also, these gaps aren't big enough for us to fit through."

Keith took a good look at the steel bars of the vent and the glanced down at his bayard. Lance seemed to catch on and he took a step backwards. Keith's bayard transformed into its signature blade and he easily cut through the thick bars, creating somewhat of a doorway for them to enter. He looked back to Lance who motioned for him to go through. "Ladies first." He remarked. Keith rolled his eyes, ignoring Lance's childish taunting.

He dropped to the floor below him silently, legs bending underneath him to soften the landing. Lance wasn't so stealthy and basically ended up landing on top of Keith. "Ow!" Keith whisper shouted at him. "Watch where you're going dumbass."

"Sorry." Lance whispered back.

Keith spotted a split in the corridor ahead, one leading left the other, right. Lance followed his gaze and they both moved forward in relative silence. Keith kept a firm grip on his bayard as they neared the end of the hallway, ready for an ambush. He glanced sideways at Lance who also had his weapon raised. They stopped at the end and Keith quickly poked his head around the corner.
"All clear." He confirmed. Turning back to Lance he noticed the disappointed look on his face. He then turned away and checked for himself, pouting when he didn't find any of their enemies.

"Damn, I was so ready to kick some Galra ass."

Keith squinted at him. It was hard to see his face in the dark hall but Lance's grin was unmistakable. "Lance! This mission isn't about kicking Galra ass. We're here to save the prisoners."

"I know. I know, but still. Shooting baddies is always a bonus." He said raising his gun at Keith with a smug look.

Keith pushed the weapon away so that it was no longer aimed at his face and let out a sigh. Why did he have to be stuck with this imbecile? He would choose just about anyone in the castle (including the mice) above Lance to join him, but instead he's stuck with Lance for like the third mission in a row now. "It looks like we're going to have to separate, if you find the prisoners let me know and I'll come and give you some cover."

"Yeah, yeah. Just don't do anything too impulsive, I don't wanna have to go back and get you because you've decided to be a hero."

"Who do you think you're talking to?" Keith questioned, turning his back to Lance in order to scout out the pathways. He chose to go right and didn't bother letting Lance know that he'd chosen his direction.

"An impulsive idiot who doesn't think things through?"

The next hallway wasn't nearly as long as the first. At the end was another right turn that lead into a small room. Several voices came into earshot as he inched closer and he stopped suddenly, holding his breath. In front of him was an arch that protruded outwards from the walls. There was just enough room for him to stand to the side without being spotted. He pushed himself in close, leaning his back against the wall as he tried to listen in on the conversation.

The voices were quiet from where he stood though he managed to make out that who ever the voice belonged to, they weren't happy. He needed to keep going. Keith scanned the room thoroughly before entering and even then he made sure to stick to the shadows. He managed to weave through a wall of boxes and stationed himself behind a large crate. He stopped again, slowing his breathing so that he could listen. The voices were still muffled and Keith guessed they were coming from behind a door.

Careful not to make a noise, he crept further into the room until he found the door he was looking for, it was one of those sliding doors that required a handprint of some sort. Keith sighed and then remembered that the enemies were just on the other side of that door. He put his ear to the cold metal and tried to quieten his breathing. "Sir, if we don't call for reinforcements right now, the ship will be destroyed." Keith recognised the voice as Galra and his body tensed. "Call them in then Alrak, just make sure my escape pod is ready first. I don't want to be on this ship when Voltron blows it up." Another voice, more gravelly than the other but definitely still Galra.

If there were only two of them in there then Keith should be able to take them out one at a time. He took a step backward and readied his sword. Heart beating fast in his chest from the adrenaline. After a few long seconds the door slid open and he lunged forward, slicing his sword upward and connecting with armour. The metal plating split when it made contact but he hadn't managed to pierce through. Shocked, his target stumbled sideways in attempt to get away but Keith held his sword to the Galra's chest. "Take another step and I'll put this sword straight through your heart." He said, gritting his teeth. The Galra was taller and probably stronger than Keith but he held his hands
up in surrender. Keith took the opportunity to peak around the doorway. The next room was only slightly larger than the previous and had a few more Galra than he’d first calculated. He counted three plus the one he had pinned to the wall. The three in the next room all stared at him in shock and Keith stared right back at them with the same expression. This was definitely not good.

Keith sprung into action, kicking his hostage to the floor before he was forced to dodge a bullet aimed at his head. While he was distracted the other Galra ran at him, forcing him to take a few steps backwards before he swung his sword once again. He managed to slice through a whole lot of nothing but his pursuer was now blocking the doorway, therefore keeping the other two Galra from shooting at him. His attacker swung at Keith with his own knife and he managed to parry. Barely keeping a hold of his sword. The Galra was much stronger than Keith and he knew it. Never the less, Keith swung at him again, this time connecting with the soldier's shoulder armour. Once he'd wrenched his sword out from the split armour, Keith ducked again to avoid yet another strong advance from his enemy. The only thing Keith could think about at the moment was taking this Galra down, then he'd have to figure out a way to get out of there as fast as possible.

The Galra advanced on him again and Keith was thrown sideways and onto the floor. He ignored the pain that now pulsed through his bicep and pushed himself off the ground in time to parry another attack. He was breathing hard now and his lungs were burning but he kept going, holding off another attack. His sword connected with the soldiers blade and he felt the force of it pushing him down. Keith grunted with the effort and tried to push back but all he managed to do was keep his sword level. Sensing no other option, he pulled back barely dodging the blade before launching into an offensive position. His enemy hadn't regained there balance yet and Keith used this against them, swinging his sword hard into their rib cage. The Galra fell to the ground, clutching at its bleeding side.

Keith now turned his attention to the last two Galra. There was a gun trained at his chest and another at his face. "Don't move." The taller one warned. Keith lowered his weapon, trying to think of a plan that wouldn't end with him getting shot. Just when he thought he'd run out of options, there was a loud siren that rang all the way through the building. Keith jumped slightly at the sound.

"The prisoners!" The other Galra shouted.
"Lance." The name fell from Keith's lips in fear. These Galra soldiers would be on Lance in a minute, he had to do something. He turned his back to the soldiers and looked out the hallway. The shot barely registered in his ears before the bullet found its mark.

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Lance swore under his breath as he ran back through the corridors, a group of twelve freed prisoners close behind. He took a right turn and the sirens seemed to ring louder as he got closer to the exit. "Nearly there." He shouted, turning to make sure they were all keeping up. "There's only-"

He was cut off by a familiar voice over the coms in his helmet. "Lance, there's at least four Galra heading towards you right now. You've got to get the prisoners out quickly." Keith sounded out of breath, making it hard for Lance to understand him.

"We're nearly at the lions, where are you?" He asked, turning the last corner and beckoning the others to keep following.
"I'm on my way, just make sure you get them out of here, I'll catch up." Keith's voice was laboured and his words drawn out. Lance wanted to question him about it but he'd already made it to the vent where they'd first entered. Lance turned off the coms and spoke quietly to the prisoners, running them through the plan. He then cupped his hands, making a step so that the prisoners could climb up to the vent. Fortunately the prisoners were all pretty light and he didn't have too much trouble lifting them up. Once they were all safely on the platform Lance jumped through the hole, using his jet pack to assist him and landed carefully outside. He heard foot steps below him and signalled for the prisoners to be quiet. They obliged just as four Galra ran by underneath them. One of them trailed behind, clutching at his chest. Lance breathed a sigh of relief that they'd gotten out without a confrontation. Now that they were relatively safe his thoughts went back to what Keith had said. How did Keith know that they were coming? Maybe he'd just seen them run by.

Pushing any pointless thoughts out of his head, Lance started loading the prisoners onto his lion. He counted twelve and thanked Quiznak that they were all safe. The only one unaccounted for was Keith. Lance turned his coms back on. "Are you coming or what?" He asked. Now slightly worried that something was wrong. He knew that he should have just left and gotten the prisoners back to the castle straight away but something was stopping him.

Keith's reply was delayed and when it came Lance knew for certain that something was wrong. "Just go.. Lance."

Lance suddenly remembered the last Galra, the injured one, clutching at its open chest. No doubt Keith had tried to fight them, that idiot. Lance switched his coms. "Allura? Are you there?"

Allura's voice came back clear and precise as always, though slightly tense. "Yes, Lance. Did you find the prisoners?"

"They're in blue right now." He replied, reassuring her before he continued. "But Keith isn't back yet and I think there's something wrong. So I was wondering if you could somehow manually fly my lion back to the castle while I go after him."

There was a short pause on the other side. "Of course, just let me find the blue lion. Yes, there it is." The lions jaw closed in front of Lance and he took a step backward as it prepared to take off. "I'll fly them back. Go find Keith, and please be careful."

"Thank you, Allura. You are truly a life saver." Lance praised before switching back to talk to Keith. "I'm on my way, Keith. Where exactly are you?" Lance, once again jumped down through the vent as his lion launched itself into space. When Keith didn't answer Lance's anxiety spiked and he ran harder, completely ignoring the fact that he was putting himself in danger for Keith, of all people.

He'd rounded two corners when he came to a reasonably small room, stacked with crates and boxes. Lance crept through the room glancing around for any signs of danger or preferably, Keith. He came up empty and moved toward a door in the far corner of the room. "Dammit!" He whispered. The door was shut and he couldn't get through without some kind of identification. Lance started pacing the room before he could panic. He tried the coms again. "Keith are you there?" He whispered into the microphone in his helmet. No reply. He tried again, louder this time.

"Shut up, idiot. You're going to get us both killed." Lance stopped pacing. Keith's voice didn't come from his helmet, it sounded like it was coming from behind the crates. Lance ran toward Keith's voice and found him on the ground with his back propped against the wall. His bayard still gripped in his left hand and his helmet only a few feet away. Lance crouched in front of him and Keith lifted his eyes to look at him through his lashes. His face seemed to be unharmed despite the small trail of blood dripping from his mouth. However he looked extremely pale and his eyebrows were scrunched together.
"Oh man. I thought you were dead." Lance felt his anxiety fall away though his stomach still churned.

"I told you.. to get the prisoners out. What.. are you doing here?" Lance had trouble hearing him over the sirens but he distinguished the gaps in his speech and the slow rise and fall of his chest as bad signs. He searched him for injuries but it was dark now that the ship had gone into lockdown and there were no signs of any blood apart from that on his face.

"The prisoners are gone, Allura's guiding blue back to the castle as we speak." Lance reached for Keith's abandoned helmet and tucked it under his arm. "We need to go. Can-

"You shouldn't be here Lance. Those Galra will be back any second now." Keith grunted and shook his head.

Lance ignored him. "Can you walk?" He asked.

Keith stared at Lance defiantly. Why was he being so stubborn? Of course, Keith was always stubborn but it didn't make sense for him to be acting like this now. "No." His tone sounded defeated and he stared at the ground for a moment before continuing. As if he didn't want to believe what he was saying. "I- I can't feel my legs."

The words took a moment to register and even then Lance just stared at him, dumbfounded. "..What?" His voice came out low and unsure. His brain tried to process this new information and he looked down at Keith's awkwardly bent legs and then his torso, leaning against the wall for support. It all clicked.

"There's a bullet in my spine that moves every time I breathe. You can't move me without pushing the bullet in deeper. It'll kill me." Keith struggled to push the sentence out in one go and Lance shook his head.

"You'll die here anyway." He didn't mean to be so blunt but it didn't seem like Keith was affected by his insensitivity.

"I'm fine with that. However, I'm not fine with you having to witness it." He looked at Lance in concern which made Lance angry. Why the hell was Keith worried about him when he was the one bleeding out on the floor. It just didn't make sense. Lance gritted his teeth and placed Keith's helmet in his lap before shuffling over so that he was in a better position.

Like hell he was going to leave his teammate behind!

"Well, I'm not fine with you dying at all." He said. Keith followed him with wide eyes and gritted his teeth when Lance carefully lifted him off the ground. He shouted in agony and Lance felt his heart sink in his chest. Keith's body went limp and his head bumped against Lance's shoulder. Lance panicked again until he felt the slight rise and fall of his chest.

It was a long walk back to Keith's lion. Lance struggled to carry his teammate without jolting him and by the time they made it to red, his whole body ached. He lifted Keith's hand and pressed his palm against the red lions nose. Red's eyes lit up and the lion opened it's jaw to let them in. The lion, as if sensing what had happened let out a deep rumble. "I know girl." Lance replied, lowering Keith
to the ground before he made his way to the control panel. He knew he couldn't fly red, he wasn't her pilot, but perhaps there was some kind of auto pilot control.

Either red was reading his mind or she had a mind of her own because before Lance could even make it to the control panel, the lion was off the ground.

Lance managed to come across a medical kit, stored inside the lion and wrapped two of the bandages around Keith's waist in an attempt to slow the bleeding, which had become quite intense. This gave him an opportunity to inspect the wound. He came to the conclusion that it was completely horrifying and he didn't want to look at it again. The Galra who shot him must have known exactly what they were doing because the bullet had pierced the small area of lining below Keith's chest plate where there was no protection.

Lance looked through one of the two windows and was met by the deep purple swirl of a wormhole. He turned his coms back on in the hopes to talk to Allura.

"Lance? Is everything okay? Did you find Keith?" Allura's voice rang in his ear. Lance let out a sigh. He didn't want to have to break the news to Allura but he did anyway.

"I found him." Lance confirmed. "But he's not in good shape. We're about to enter the wormhole but when we get to the castle he's going to need medical attention straight away."

There was a long pause before Allura answered him. "Okay." She said with as much confidence as she could muster. "I'll meet you In the hangar in a few ticks." And then she shut off their communication.

Lance turned his attention back to Keith who was now conscious and watching him carefully. His body was leaning sideways and Lance grabbed his shoulder to stop him from falling. "You're not dead, I see. Looks like you owe me an apology."

Lance knew it wasn't the best time to be insulting Keith but he was nervous.

Keith scoffed and then winced immediately afterwards. "You alright?"

"Okay, so maybe that was a stupid question." Lance deadpanned. He became aware of his hand that still rested on Keith's shoulder but didn't bother moving it. He took comfort in the fact that he could at least help by keeping his teammate upright.

"Have you heard from Shiro and the others yet?" His tone suddenly worried. "The Galra said they would call for back up. They have to get out of there." Keith winced as he moved forward.

"Alright, I'll let them know. Just don't work yourself up." Lance pushed him toward the wall. Keith nodded and leaned his head back. He watched him take a few shallow breaths.

Lance didn't understand how Keith was holding himself together so well. If their positions were switched he'd probably be crying like a baby by now, but Keith was barely showing any pain.

Red got them back to the castle on her own and Lance filled Allura in on the details as he carried Keith's limp body through the castle. Keith grumbled every time Lance jostled him but otherwise he stayed silent. Allura took one look at the red paladin and her spirit seemed to drain out of her. She managed to put on a brave face though and Lance followed her to the castle's medbay where Coran was waiting. "We'll have to extract the bullet before he can go in the healing pod, otherwise it will cause more damage later on." Lance agreed and carefully lowered Keith onto the metal operating
table before he was asked, by Allura, to wait outside.

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Lance could still hear Keith’s agonised screams in his head when Shiro and the others arrived. He had sat by the door when they removed the bullet but it all got too much and he'd decided to wait in another room. Now he sat across from Keith's healing pod with his legs folded underneath him. Keith had been terrifyingly pale when they brought him out and along with Keith's screams he couldn't get that picture out of his head.

"How's he doing?" Shiro asked as he approached Keith's healing pod. He was trying desperately to hide his worry but his tight shoulders and pinched eyebrows gave him away.

"The bullet's out and his vitals are good. He should be okay." Allura reassured Shiro. Shiro nodded his thanks and turned to Lance.

Lance knew what Shiro would say. He already knew that he shouldn't have split with Keith. They should have stuck together and had each other's backs. This was his fault. When Shiro approached him, Lance rose to his feet and prepared himself for a lecture. What he hadn't expect was for Shiro to pull him into an embrace, his strong arms pulling Lance into his chest.

"Thank you," He said. "For looking after him."

Shiro pulled away to look at him. Lance bit his lip and stared at the floor. He felt his breath hitch in his throat. "I'm sorry. I- I should have stayed with him. If I stayed with him none of this would have happened." He put his head in his hands to hide his face.

Shiro placed his hand on Lance's shoulder. "Hey, look at me." He said gently. Lance didn't move. He was too ashamed to show his face. His leader slowly moved Lance's hands away so that he had to look at him. "None of this is your fault Lance. It's not anyone's fault. I won't let you blame yourself for this, everyone here knows that you did all you could. Including Keith."

Shiro stared him down so hard that Lance had to give in. "Okay." He said quietly but he didn't believe it.

Lance listened as Shiro told them about how their mission had gone. At first they'd gone there to gather any information they could on where the other prisoners could be but it had turned into a full on battle when the Galra realised what they were up to. "There were so many of them." Hunk whispered to Lance as they listened to Shiro's story. "I honestly thought we were toast." Shiro went on to talk about how Pidge hacked into their systems and found a whole bunch of locations for the other prisoners. Unfortunately she didn't find anything about her brother and father. Then he thanked Lance for giving them a heads up about the reinforcements. Lance reminded them that Keith was the one who found out about the Galras plan, Lance was just the one to forward the message.

Coran gave them updates on how the rescued prisoners were doing. They'd offered them food and a place to rest for a few days before they were to return to their families. Coran said they were all healthy and thankful for the hospitality.

Allura had offered to keep watch over Keith through the night though Lance was sure Shiro wouldn't be leaving any time soon. The other three paladins said goodnight and went off to bed.
Lance had a fitful sleep and woke up in the middle of the night feeling restless. It seemed that every time he closed his eyes all he saw was blood and Keith's crumpled body and his ghostly pale skin. He gave up on sleeping after a few hours and went down to the infirmary.

Allura turned when he entered and offered him a small smile. Lance moved to stand beside her. "Trouble sleeping?" Allura asked. She turned her attention away from where she'd been analysing Keith's progress and her eyes landed on Lance. She seemed stressed and tense which wasn't uncommon for her.

Lance nodded but didn't explain himself. He didn't believe it was necessary to burden Allura with his own worries.

"I cannot either. " Allura responded, her voice cut through the silence of the room. "I am concerned about Keith's recovery. The pod is healing his wounds like it should be, however it's hard to know whether he will fully recover and without the use of his legs I doubt he will be an efficient paladin."

She lowered her gaze as if she was ashamed of herself for thinking such a thing. Lance had similar doubts about his teammates recovery but he'd never thought about the implications for Voltron. Allura had shared the details of Keith's injuries with the rest of the team and Lance guessed they'd all taken his duty into account.

"He's tough." Lance hated admitting it even though they all knew it was true. Keith wasn't one to let things like this get him down, it was one of Keith's many qualities that Lance admired and envied. "I'm sure he'll be fine. If he isn't then we'll have to figure something out later."

Allura left a few minutes later in the hopes to get at least some sleep. Lance sat on the stairs infront of Keith's pod and waited.

The other paladins started filing in one by one in the morning. The first one to enter was Pidge. They found him face down on the floor with his head resting on his forearms. "What are you doing?" Pidge asked skeptically, taking a look at Keith's charts.

"What does it look like to you?" Lance mumbled into the cold hard floor.

"It looks," Pidge replied. "Like you're exhausted. Did you get any sleep last night?"

"Nope." Lance sat up and stretched his limbs. "What gave me away."

Pidge squinted at him in concern. "I don't know, maybe the fact that you're lying face down on the floor." They had a point.

The pod finally cracked open at what seemed like midday. It was hard to tell when you were floating around aimlessly in space. Lance had been casually walking by, about to announce that he was
going to get some lunch when he was hit by a puff of cold air.

He turned to see Keith's legs give out from under him and Lance quickly swooped in to grab him, he barely caught him before he hit the ground. Keith's hand gripped his shoulder hard as he struggled to support his own body weight. He stared at Lance, expression a mixture of confusion and panic. His dark hair was slightly ruffled and his skin cold to touch.

Lance searched his eyes for a moment before he realised what was wrong. He was still holding all of Keith's weight. Keith wasn't supporting himself at all. Lance's eyes widened as his brain finally worked through the possibility that Keith hadn't fully healed.

He carefully lowered him to the ground where they both sat, catching their breath. The concern Lance had been feelings for the last several hours seemed to reach its peak as Keith turned his eyes away from Lance and directed them at his legs. His face momentarily strained with effort but nothing happened. Lance watched him carefully, looking for any hints as to what was going on. He removed his grip on Lance's shoulder and ran a shaky hand down his legs.

Lance's anticipation only grew as Keith's palm ran all the way down his right leg and then his left. The other paladins, who had been previously watching from afar, moved in to crouch beside Lance. He payed them no attention, waiting patiently for Keith to say something. He didn't, just closed his eyes and let out a sigh.

Lance lowered his head in disappointment.
Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

Hello lovely readers. Just wanted to say thanks to everyone who left kudos and comments on the first chapter, you're amazing. Also I haven't proof read this chapter yet so don't mind the typos! Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

In all sixteen years of his life, Keith had never been so depressed. Not only had that shot paralysed him from the waist down, it had also severely wounded his pride. Combat had always been his thing. Just like Pidge was incredibly smart, Hunk was a great chef, Shiro their leader and Lance was great with people. Without his legs, Keith didn't have a thing anymore. This knowledge and the fact that he'd just been carried all the way to his room by their leader was enough to rip apart any last shred of pride Keith held.

Shiro seemed to notice that Keith wasn't in the mood to talk as he didn't pester him too much. Keith was seated on the edge of his bed, arms spread beside him for support. He'd never realised how important legs were for stability, even when you're sitting down. Shiro took a seat beside him and was relatively quiet for a moment. Part of Keith wished Shiro would say something before he started overthinking things. He knew that once Shiro was gone his thoughts would drift to the topics that he'd prefer not to think about.

"We'll figure this out." Shiro finally spoke. Keith appreciated the gesture but he was sure that nothing Shiro said to him right now would improve his mood.

Shiro must have noticed Keith's expression because he kept talking. "I'm serious. We can make this work."

Keith only nodded in the hopes that it would make Shiro feel better. It didn't make a difference. He still had that concerned look across his features. "Alright. Try and get some rest." He said weakly. "I'll see you tomorrow."

Once Shiro was gone, Keith managed to pull himself under the covers so that he could lie on his back. Even this was difficult as he had to pick up his legs and manually move them in order to get comfortable.

He tried not to be pessimistic about all the things he wouldn't be able to do without legs. Unfortunately, his mind was set on torturing him even more. Deep down he knew that he wouldn't be able to continue as a paladin of Voltron. There was no way to fly his lion if he couldn't use the pedals. Even if they could figure out a way to make that work, he still couldn't leave his lion, not without a wheelchair, and even then he'd be too slow.

Keith rolled over and buried his face in his pillow. Maybe, if he was lucky, he would smother himself to death.

A knock on the door caught his attention. Keith sighed. A distraction would be welcome right about now, but he really didn't want to listen to another lecture about how he should remain hopeful. After
contemplating whether or not to ignore whoever was on the other side of the door he finally called for them to come in.

Lance was maybe the last person he'd expected to see, it made sense that he'd come to talk to Keith but it was still unexpected. "We found a wheelchair downstairs. It's pretty old and crappy but it should do for now." Lance wheeled the chair in and placed it beside the bed so that Keith could inspect it. Keith pulled himself into a sitting position and ran his eyes over the chair. Lance hadn't been joking, the thing was a piece of crap. It was old and battered but it seemed operational so Keith supposed he couldn't really complain. "I thought I'd bring it in now, before Pidge tried to install rocket boosters or something."

Keith felt a smile tugging at the corners of his mouth. "Thanks."

Lance nodded and sat down in the wheelchair so that they were at the same level. Keith noticed Lances voice take on a more serious tone. "How are you doing?"

Keith was taken aback by the question. None of the others had actually asked him how he was doing. They'd been reassuring and supportive, of course, but they hadn't asked him how he felt about the whole thing.

He obviously wasn't alright, he couldn't even feel the bottom half of his body. Lance obviously knew this so he didn't bring it up. "Okay, I guess. Just trying not to think too much."

Lance smirked. "That shouldn't be too hard for you."

Keith offered him a feigned look of hurt, happy to have something to distract him from the negativity running through his head, even if it was bickering with Lance. "I can't believe you'd stoop so low as to pick on a cripple."

"Oh my, the great Keith Kogane expecting sympathy from his teammate, how the tables have turned."

Keith held back from retorting. He knew that Lance was just messing around but it made him realise something. He really didn't want sympathy. It was actually the last thing he wanted right now. He hadn't gotten sympathy before, receiving it now would just be strange. Especially if it was coming from Lance.

"For what it's worth though," Lance's voice was low and serious. "I'm really sorry that this happened."

"What do you mean you're sorry. It's not like any of this is you fault."

Lance folded in on himself, his eyes held a place on the floor. "Well..."

Keith sighed. He didn't pretend to know the first thing about what was going on inside Lance's head, but he had noticed that Lance had a tendency to blame himself for everything. He'd never voiced his worries aloud, not to Keith anyway, but it was noticeable, even to someone as oblivious as Keith.

Lance had begun worrying at his bottom lip, running it between his teeth. His eyes were still focused on their place on the floor.

"Lance. Stop it." Keith moved closer so that Lance had no choice but to look at him. His blue eyes lifted to meet Keith's own and a light blush fell across his cheeks. "You weren't even there when it happened, how can this possibly be your fault?"
"Exactly." Lance's voice rose. "We were meant to stick together, have each other's back."

Keith sighed again. He really didn't know how to deal with situations like these, he'd never been a good people person. Honestly being stuck in the castle with six other people was quite challenging for him at times. But he tried his best. "Lance." Lance shifted at the mention of his name and he focused on Keith again. "I wouldn't blame any of this on you, it's not your fault. So don't blame yourself."

Lance went to open his mouth again but Keith raised his eyebrows at him, warning the boy not to argue. Lance huffed at him, signifying that he'd given up. "Okay." He said in a tone of defeat. He forced himself to straighten up as he stood. "You're probably tired so I'll leave you alone now. See you in the morning."

Keith felt the urge to ask him to stay. He'd enjoyed Lance's company, even if the mood had turned somber, and he didn't want Lance to leave him alone with his thoughts. His head got the better of him and he decided that asking Lance to stay would be weird. Plus, Lance probably had better things to do.

"See ya." Keith replied quietly and Lance was out the door.

Once Lance was gone things were quiet again but before he could let himself think too much Keith decided to lay down and try to get some sleep. It didn't take long.

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Keith woke up feeling panicked. He hadn't gotten used to the feeling of not feeling his lower limbs. This accompanied with morning gogginess left him very confused when he tried to get out of bed.

He took a moment to contain his frayed nerves and went about figuring out a strategy for getting from his bed to a ten-thousand-year-old-rickety-little wheelchair without ending up on the floor. The thing looked dangerously light and he feared that if he tried to shift his weight into it, it would flip on him.

He reluctantly shuffled over to the edge of the bed and pulled the wobbly old chair toward him. If things went to plan, Keith would end up safely seated in the chair, if not he'd be flopping around on the floor. He decided to go for it.

He missed.

The chair didn't flip over or anything. He just completely miscalculated and landed on his ass. He rolled onto his side, groaning and clutching at his tailbone. What a pitiful sight he was. Keith was extremely thankful that no one was there to witness his failure. This would have made for some legendary blackmail material.

After a lot of rolling around and a minor tantrum, Keith made it into the chair safely and managed to wheel himself out of his room.

The hallway was so quiet that every time he pushed the wheels on his chair he'd wince at the high pitched squeak. He prayed that someone would be able to fix that, or even throw the stupid thing in the trash and get him a new one with a more comfortable seat. If he was going to be stuck in a chair for the rest of his life, he at least wanted to be comfortable. Not that he was complaining.
Apart from the squeaks and the constant fear that it was going to collapse beneath his weight, the chair wasn't so bad. Sure it sucked not being able to walk down these hallways, but at least he could move on his own now.

He wasn't sure if the squeaky chair gave him away or if Pidge had just been looking for him in the first place, but as he made his way slowly down the hallway, he was distracted by quick footsteps moving behind him.

"Hey Keith." Pidge called as she ran up beside him, slowing to a stop once she'd caught up. Keith halted and stared up at her, expecting her to continue. She looked over him quickly before continuing. "How's the new chair?" She asked, still trying to catch her breath.

Keith thought she had way too much energy for seven in the morning, though it was common knowledge that Pidge didn't get much sleep anyway. She'd probably been up for hours.

"Loud," Keith explained. "Listen." Keith moved his chair back and forth, the squeaks were prominent in the quiet hallway.

Pidge waved her hand dismissively. "No biggie, Hunk can fix that for you." She said with an easy smile. A mischievous glint had made its way to her eyes and she leaned in closer. "And if you need any other special upgrades you just let me know, I'll see what I can do."

Keith remembered what Lance had said the day before about Pidge wanting to add rocket boosters to the chair. Who knew what other upgrades Pidge would come up with. He appreciated the offer though. "Will do, thanks Pidge."

Pidge punched him playfully in the arm. "Oh, by the way, Shiro and Allura are in the control room. They told me to send you down there if I saw you."

Shiro and Allura were looking for him? That didn't sound good. Keith thanked Pidge again and slowly made his way toward the control room. His stomach churned with dread. Surely his other teammates would have considered their new situation as a team. As far as Keith was concerned they were now a man down. He wasn't fit to be a paladin anymore, this would mean a change in dynamic for Voltron.

He'd hoped they wouldn't have to discuss the matter until a later date but it only made sense that they got it over and done with now so that they could search for a new paladin to take his place.

Shiro and Allura were deep in conversation when Keith entered the room. They didn't notice him at first and Keith felt like maybe he was intruding but then Allura turned and smiled at him. "Keith, come in." She said with a wave of her hand.

Keith felt their eyes on him as he wheeled over to where they stood. He had to lift his head in order to look at them, it was surprising how intimidated he felt looking up at the pair from such a low angle. Was this how Pidge felt when she looked up at him?

"Good to see you up and about." Shiro commented. "How's the chair?"

Keith raised his eyebrows. Why was everyone asking him about the damn chair? "Uhh, yeah it's fine." He replied.

"That's excellent news." Allura said cheerfully. "Shiro and I also have some good news for you." Keith quirked his eyebrows at her. He definitely hadn't come in here expecting good news. Allura continued. "We recently received a distress signal from a planet renowned for their advanced healing techniques. Maybe they can help you."
Keith pursed his lips, he was speechless. Several questions ran through his mind at the same time. He
decided to address them individually. "Shouldn't we be looking for a new paladin instead? The
universe needs Voltron now."

Allura shook her head in confusion. "That's why we're going to this planet Keith. If these people can
help you, you'll continue as the red lion's paladin."

"But what if it doesn't work?"

"Then we'll try something else." Shiro replied. "I'm not giving up on you Keith, so don't you go
giving up on yourself."

Keith felt like he'd been slapped. He hadn't given up on himself at all, he just didn't want the others
wasting their time on him when they could be doing something more important.

"Either way, we have to defend the planet anyway. It's your decision whether you want to try this or
not." Allura gave him a pointed look. She reminded Keith of the teachers at the garrison when they
lectured cadets for misbehaving. Her gaze was intimidating. "It's worth a try, isn't it?"

Keith supposed she was right but he still thought they were wasting their time.

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Lance entered the control room, fully suited up and ready to kick some ass. Allura gave them the
brief and they were all happy to oblige, of course. Lance got the feeling that the only one who wasn't
keen on the mission was Keith.

Keith had been quiet throughout the entire mission briefing which wasn't uncommon for him but he
didn't even seem to be listening this time. Even if he wasn't participating in the battle, Lance thought
he would at least listen to the plan. He wondered what was going on in Keith's head at the moment.

It had been a shock, seeing Keith in a wheelchair. Lance wasn't sure what he'd expected but he
definitely didn't imagine Keith to look so fragile. Of course it was a fake perception. Keith was still
fully capable of taking him down, he'd just have to hit him in the kneecaps instead of the face. Still, it
was a strange concept, associating Keith with fragility.

Once Allura had finished delivering the plan they were given ten minutes to prepare for the
upcoming mission. Seeing as Lance was already suited up and ready to go, this meant ten minutes of
free time. He decided to check up on Keith. Lance was curious to find out what was bugging him.

"What's with the sour face?" He called out as he made his way to Keith's side. The red paladin
furrowed his eyebrows as if he didn't realise he'd been scowling.

"Shouldn't you be getting ready like the others?" Keith asked. Lance noticed that he'd blatantly
ignored his question. He decided not to push, if Keith wanted to keep things to himself then Lance
wouldn't hassle him. That didn't mean that Lance couldn't ignore his questions either.

"So, these healers, did Allura tell you much about them?"

Keith gave him the side eye before turning to face Lance properly. "Not really." Keith shrugged.
"Just that they had advanced healing powers about ten thousand years ago." He deadpanned.
Lance smirked. "No need to be such an optimist."

"Well, someone has to be realistic." Keith murmured. He looked away and Lance followed his gaze. Across the room Shiro and Allura were chattering excitedly. Keith was watching them with a look of dissatisfaction. Lance wondered what had him so down in the dumps all of a sudden.

"You don't think they'll be able to help you?" Lance asked, curious.

Keith shook his head. Lance didn't blame him for doubting. He had his own doubts about these healers but he had hope that it might work out for them. They'd had a lot of bad luck in the team lately, surely they deserved at least one success.

And despite everything he did to try to rile his teammate up, Lance did really care about him. He liked having Keith as a part of the team. Something about the red paladin made him feel more confident and having such a talented pilot on the team pushed Lance to be better -not that he'd ever tell Keith any of that-, it would suck to have Keith replaced by some random.

"I hope you're wrong." Lance said, he stared down at Keith long enough to let him know that he meant it. Keith sent him a halfhearted smile in return but at least it was something.

--

Keith's nerves left him fidgeting in his chair. The paladins were in their lion's now and he could see their face's on the screen in the control room. Out the front window he could see the four lions floating just ahead of them. Past the lions there was a huge blue and yellow planet.

"Banukkan looks very much the same as it did ten-thousand years ago." Allura commented. She looked to Coran for an explanation.

The redhead twisted his moustache a few times before answering. "Our updated maps show that Banukkan is quite isolated from any other planets. Perhaps the Galra are using the planet as a base for this part of the universe. They wouldn't destroy the planet if they needed to use it."

"If this is true then we'll be gravely outnumbered." Allura replied, turning back to the screens in front of her. Keith felt a sudden sense of guilt. They were currently down a lion because of him and he couldn't do anything about it. He was like dead weight.

Keith overheard Shiro talking through the coms, his face sharp and determined as always. Lance must have made a dumb comment afterwards because the whole team groaned. Keith smiled, trust Lance to say something dumb.

Shiro was talking again and Keith moved in closer so that he could hear what he was saying. "-entering the planets atmosphere. You know the plan, team. Lets do this!"

He was answered by a shout from his teammates and they all split up. Shiro and Pidge headed toward the small base the Galra had set up on the planet whilst Lance and Hunk laid down cover fire. A small fleet of drone pilots were released due to the interruption. Keith was watching the whole thing from the relative safety of the castle.

Lance and Hunk worked together to take out the ships, quickly depleting their enemies. When they'd almost taken them all out a larger fleet emerged. Keith heard Lance grumble over the coms. He
turned his attention back to the screen. "You two inside yet? We're kind of getting swarmed out here." Lance complained without taking his eyes off the oncoming ships.

"We're nearly there." Shiro replied at a low whisper. "Just hold them back as long as you can."

Lance audibly huffed in reply. "Easier said than done."

The blue and yellow lions were becoming highly outnumbered by now but the pair persisted to take down as many enemies as they could. Keith wondered if maybe now was a good time for Allura to fire the castle's lasers to help them out but he figured that might cause a lot more damage to the planet than it did to their enemies. Things would be a lot easier if they had a fifth lion to help them out.

"We've got the information." Shiro announced over the coms. "There's no prisoners being held in here so as soon as we're out of here you can take the base down."

"Aha." Lance shouted. "That's more like it."

Keith stared out the castle's window. Lance and Hunk were still busy picking off drones as they emerged from the base in small groups. If they could just take out the base then they wouldn't have to worry about any more drones.

The black and green lions came back into view and all of a sudden Hunk and Lance were firing their lasers at the base instead. The hangar where the drones had previously emerged from exploded in a burst of flames.

Shiro turned his lion and fired his mouth canon at the main entrance to the base but he barely left a mark. "This exterior is too strong for our canons." He said over the coms.

"Not to worry." Allura replied, adjusting the castle's weapons. "You might want to move out of the way."

The lions scattered in an attempt to get out of the way and Allura fired the lasers at full power. In a few hits the base had been completely destroyed.

The team hoot and even Allura and Coran looked pleased. Allura turned to Keith. "Time to go meet the Banukki." She said.

Keith swallowed hard.

Chapter End Notes

Hi again. Thanks for reading this chapter, I hope you liked it! Sorry if it dragged on a little, I struggled a bit with getting the story to flow nicely so hopefully it's not too crazy. Anyway thanks again!
Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

Hi again, I probably sound like a broken record but I just want to thank everyone who left kudos and commented on this story. You're all so nice.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The other paladins entered the room, excited after a successful mission. Shiro moved in to stand next to Allura like he always did while Lance, Hunk and Pidge stood a little further back.

"Have you heard anything from the locals yet?" Shiro asked Allura as he stared out the front window.

"Nothing." She replied. "I cannot seem to locate them on the scanners either. It's as though they're not even there."

Everyone in the room went quiet for a beat before Lance spoke up. "The distress signal must have come from somewhere." He said, voicing everyone's thoughts.

They all agreed. "We should go down there and have a look, just in case there is anyone down there." Shiro decided.

-

The climate on Bannukan was warm and breezy. It reminded Keith of the summers he'd experienced back on earth. Apart from the whistle of the light breeze, the team was welcomed by silence. They all exited the castle in order to investigate the village, even Coran and Allura.

They'd already passed several houses before witnessing any signs of life. Keith stopped when he saw it, causing Pidge to run into him.

"Ow." Pidge exclaimed sarcastically, causing the others to turn. They looked at Pidge in question and then Keith felt their eyes on him.

He'd definitely seen something. Two round eyes watching them from behind a curtain. The creature was watching them.

"I think there's something in there." He explained. Nodding toward the house where he'd seen the creature. Keith kept his eyes glued to the curtains, waiting for them to move again. The others turned toward the small building to see for themselves. The creature must have gotten spooked because the curtains swung briefly, confirming Keith's suspicions.

Allura was the first to move. She took a step in the the direction of the little cottage, stopping before the door. "We're not going to hurt you. She said in an non-threatening tone. The other side of the door remained quiet so she continued.
"I am princess Allura of Altea and these are the paladins of Voltron. I received your distress signal. We're here to help."

The door cracked open and a pair of big blue eyes peeked out at them. Then there was another head, poking through the gap in the door. "Voltron?" They asked tentatively.

"You've heard of us?" Shiro asked. He'd moved closer to the creatures and stood with the princess.

The second creature nodded before opening the door wide enough to let them in. Keith looked past the first two Bannuki and into the house. From what he could see the place was tiny. There was no way they could all fit inside. "We will take you to our queen. Follow me."

Allura and Shiro seemed hesitant because they both looked back at the others and gave them a questioning look. Keith shrugged, unsure.

Shiro peered past the door before stepping in. Allura was close behind him. Keith looked behind him at Lance. The blue paladin motioned for him to go ahead. He followed Allura through the door and found that the room was even smaller than he'd actually expected. What he hadn't noticed before was the gaping hole in the floor, descending sharply down to an underground tunnel.

Sitting beside the entry to the tunnel was a discarded trapdoor and rug. He pushed on, taking the steep ramp carefully.

"Our people started digging these tunnels over two hundred years ago, when the Galra first invaded our planet." Keith recognised the voice as the second Banukki creature. He couldn't see much past a few metres ahead of him so he made sure to stay close to Allura, using the feint glow of her Altean markings as a guide. Shiro and the two Bannuki were out of eyeshot.

The second Banukki continued. "Many of our people have lived down here their whole lives, we thrive away from the eyes of the Galra."

"This is amazing." Allura gasped.

It really was. The tunnels seemed to go on forever. How the Banukki had created such a large cave system and kept it a secret for so long was mind blowing to Keith.

The tunnel led them to a huge cavern filled with locals. They all stopped to watch the visitors as they made their way through the room to a smaller room. Keith finally got an opportunity to see them in full. Their features were quite similar to that of humans. The only distinguishing features were a long slim tail and big blue glowing eyes.

The next cave was occupied by only one Bannuki. She was the largest of her kind that Keith had come across, a fragile crown atop her head signified her status. She was their queen.

"Welcome, friends." She announced, bowing her head in a friendly manner. Allura moved forward to shake the woman's hand in greeting. "Thank you for answering our distress call, we owe you a great debt for your trouble." The woman said kindly.

"We were happy to help." Allura replied. She stepped away to stand with the paladins.

The queen ran her eyes over the group. "The legend speaks of five paladins, but there are only four of you in uniform. Where is the fifth?" She asked.

Allura spoke on Keith's behalf which Keith was thankful for. He wouldn't have known what to say.
"Our fifth paladin, Keith." Allura gestured toward him. "Was injured in the team's most recent battle and is unable to pilot his lion. We were actually hoping you could help him so that he may recover."

The queen stared at Keith, inspecting him with a neutral expression. "I see," she replied. "I must say that my healing skills are not what they use to be, but I would be happy to try."

Keith raised his eyebrows in surprise. He hadn't expected that these people would be so willing to help. "Come with me, Keith, and bring a friend if you desire. The rest of you are welcome to explore our kingdom." She turned and beckoned for Keith to follow.

Keith didn't move at first. He wasn't sure whether he wanted to 'take a friend' with him or not. In the end he didn't get much of a say in the matter. Suddenly his wheelchair was moving without his instruction. He turned in his seat to see that Lance was pushing him in the direction the queen had gone. "You guys go check out the scenery, I'll keep the mullet company."

Keith squinted at him. What kind of game was Lance playing at now. First he'd been nice to Keith when they talked that morning and now he was volunteering to spend extra time with him? Keith found Lance's behaviour to be extremely suspicious. He hoped he wasn't doing all this because he felt bad for Keith, that would be embarrassing.

They said their goodbyes before exiting the room. The rest of the team wished Keith luck.

--

Lance followed Keith into an even smaller cave than the last. He noticed a young looking Banukki girl sitting in a chair at the end of the room. The girl stood up when they entered, pushing aside some kind of book she'd been reading.

"Your highness, who are these people?" The girl asked, her eyes filled with wonder as she stared at both Lance and Keith respectively.

"These are the paladins of Voltron, my dear. They came to help us and in return we will help them." The queen replied. She looked fondly at the girl. Lance guessed that this was the queen's daughter. She was a pretty girl, but Lance didn't even think about hitting on her, she looked a lot younger than he was and if the queen was her mother then he'd probably get his ass kicked for trying. This princess was definitely off limits.

"Why do they look so odd?" The girl asked quietly. Lance tried his best not to be highly offended.

"Excuse my daughter." The queen replied as she cleared off a table situated in the centre of the room. "She has never been above the surface. You two are the first foreigners she has ever met."

The girl smiled shyly. "Is it as beautiful as they say it is, up there?"

Before Lance could even think of an answer the queen spoke. "We can talk about this later Abele." She said before gesturing for Keith to sit on the table.

Lance didn't miss Keith's hesitation, the table in question was at about the same height as Keith's chin from where he sat. Keith wouldn't be able to pull himself up.

Lance approached Keith's side and bent down to lift him up. Keith whipped his head around and started to whack Lance's arm away. His eyes wide with confusion.

"Oh, get over yourself. There's no way you're getting up there on your own." Lance moved to lift his
teammate again, quirking his eyebrows to ask for permission first. Keith rolled his eyes and Lance took that as a yes.

He dipped one arm underneath Keith's kneecaps and the other wrapped around his torso. Lance instantly noticed that holding a fully conscious and responsive Keith was much less terrifying than when he'd carried him to his lion less than two days ago. "Don't get too used to this, Mullet. I won't be carrying you around once those legs start working again."

Keith scoffed at him. "I wouldn't count on it." He grumbled.

Lance seated him on the edge of the table and made sure that Keith wasn't going to fall over before he let go. He stepped back, moving the discarded wheelchair out of the way.

"Mullet?" The princess asked. "Is that your name?"

Keith's face went an adorable shade of pink as he stared at the princess. Then he turned away in favour of scowling at Lance who was now chuckling. The princess looked between them with a confused expression.

"No." He laughed. "I call him Mullet because of his dumb haircut."

"Oh." The young girl looked over at Keith again, tilting her head slightly. She smiled. "I think you have nice hair."

Keith blushed again. "Thank you." He said to the princess before flashing a shit eating grin in Lance's direction. Lance poked his tongue out in retaliation.

The queen laughed at her daughters comment before moving on. "So, what's the problem, Keith."

She asked.

Keith twisted his body around and lifted the back of his shirt to reveal a thin white scar across his pale skin. Lance was surprised to see that the scar was still visible, he hadn't been left with any scars after his time in the healing pod.

"Bullet went through here and caused some kind of nerve damage in my spine. Now I can't feel my legs." Keith spoke the way one would if he was talking about what he'd had for lunch.

"Hmmm." The queen murmured. Lance felt his hopes falter. That didn't sound like a good hmmm to him.

She got Keith to lay on his stomach so that she could analyse him better. He was now spread across the length of the table with his head resting on his forearms.

The queen then proceeded to poke and prod Keith in the back and the legs, asking if he could feel anything. Keith's answers mainly consisted of no's, more so after she moved below his hips.

Lance wondered what it would be like if he couldn't feel his own legs. It must be frustrating, not being able to move the bottom half of his body, especially for someone as active as Keith.

The queen finished her analysis and moved toward the other side of the table. "I've never healed an injury like this before." She said, rubbing her hands together. She looked slightly perplexed. "But, I can only try to help you. You must hold still during the process."

Keith nodded before falling still. His eyes locked with Lance's from across the room as the queen pressed a hand against his spine. She closed her eyes and some kind of blue energy began radiating
from her hand. Lance watched in interest as she moved her hands down the length of Keith's legs and back up again. He had no idea what it was that she was doing but he still watched contently.

When she was finished she frowned. "That didn't do anything, did it?" She asked dryly.

"I don't think so." Keith replied.

Lance felt his own mouth fall into a frown. He really thought that these people would be able to help Keith in some way.

"Perhaps we can try something else."

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Keith sat on the edge of the table feeling slightly disappointed. He hadn't expected the queen's healing methods to work but apparently part of him had hoped that they would.

The queen moved to stand in front of him. "The only thing I can think of is to analyse the scenario." She said.

"What? How would you do that?"

The queen pressed two fingers to his temples. "I can access your memories, if you'd let me. I must warn you though, the process can be uncomfortable."

Keith pulled away. He didn't want anyone going through his memories. Especially not someone he barely knew. For some reason he turned to look at Lance to see what he thought. Lance shrugged, "It might help."

This was true. The whole reason they'd come here was to try and help him. It made sense for him to try. Plus, he wanted his life back. Being stuck in a wheelchair for the rest of his life wasn't really living, not to him anyway. And he had a duty to fulfil, he couldn't let his teammates down just because he didn't want someone looking at one tiny memory.

"Okay." He said reluctantly.

The queen nodded. She moved her hands to the sides of his face again. Pressing her fingertips lightly against his temples. Keith felt it was appropriate to close his eyes. So he did.

Suddenly he was no longer in the same room. Instead, he was sprawled on a cold metal floor, the sound of sirens blaring in his ears. He was terrified. The bullet in his spine sent a sharp ache throughout his body. Keith involuntarily cried out in pain.

Keith didn't realise that he would have to relive the memory in so much detail. He wanted out as soon as it started.

But the memory continued. He dragged himself across the floor. Using all the strength he could muster to conceal himself from his enemies. He'd nearly made it behind the first set of huge crates when his legs began to go numb. Keith felt his panic swell but he kept moving until he could prop himself up against the wall.

Now that he was hidden his thoughts went out to his teammate. He had to warn Lance about the
"Lance, there's at least four Galra heading toward you right now. You've got to get the prisoners out quickly." He did his best to keep his voice level but he was finding it hard to catch his breath. He hoped Lance didn't notice.

"We're nearly at the lions, where are you?"

Keith was relieved to hear Lance's voice. He was okay. Then a thought struck him. He wanted Lance to get out of here. If Lance knew he was in trouble he'd come back for him. Keith wouldn't be able to live with himself if Lance got hurt trying to save him.

"I'm on my way," He lied. "Just make sure you get them out of here. I'll catch up." The line went quiet and Keith was glad that Lance didn't try to fight him on this.

He switched off his communications and focused on slowing his heart rate down. Each shuddering breath he took seemed to push the bullet further into his spine. It was excruciatingly painful.

Once his panic had settled, Keith came to the realisation that he was going to die alone, bleeding out on a Galra warship, in extreme pain.

Keith thought that when the time did come, it would be different. He didn't want to die. Not like this. He'd never been so afraid.

--

Lance was becoming impatient. The princess had become very chatty all of a sudden and kept asking him questions. Meanwhile, Lance was busy worrying over his teammate who was showing obvious signs of distress. The queen was still searching his memories, from what he could tell. Her face was calm and still whereas Keith had begun to grit his teeth and his eyebrows were scrunched together.

Lance turned toward the princess who was watching the pair quietly. "How long does this usually take?" He asked impatiently.

She shrugged. "Not long."

Well that was helpful. Two minutes ago she wouldn't shut up and now all he gets is a 'Not long.'

The princess turned to face him then. "Is he your friend?" She asked.

It was a simple enough question and Lance knew how he would answer. Even though he'd declared Keith as his rival and he was continuously doing everything he could to get Keith riled up, he did still consider him a friend. The reason he did all those things to annoy Keith was because it was the only way he knew how to get his attention.

Whether Keith thought they were friends or not was beyond Lance's knowledge. Keith didn't often give away much about his feelings. He could absolutely hate him or he could like him and Lance wouldn't have a clue which it was.

For the sake of not being bothered to explain the situation Lance's reply was short. "Yeah, he is."

"Do you like him?" The princess asked in a teasing manner.

Lance narrowed his eyes at her. Yes, he supposed he liked Keith AS A FRIEND. But liking him in a romantic way was definitely not something that he was willing to talk about with a little girl. Nope.
Absolutely not.

Fortunately, their conversation was cut short by a sharp intake of breath. Keith's eyes were wide and vacant as he stared up at the queen. She took a few small steps backward in shock, shaking her head. "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to..."

Lance's jaw tightened. What the hell was happening? He looked between the queen and an unresponsive Keith. The queen looked just as confused as Lance felt but she didn't move.

Lance found himself moving toward Keith. He bent over so that they were face to face. Keith just stared at him, his body rigid. His eyes were still wide and unfocused. Lance thought he looked almost terrified.

He placed his hand on Keith's shoulder, shaking him lightly. This seemed to get Keith's attention. He blinked a few times, focusing on Lance.

"What's wrong?" Lance asked quietly. He searched Keith's eyes and noticed that they shone with tears. What the quiznak?

"Nothing. I'm fine." Keith's eyebrows knitted together and he blinked away any signs that he'd been upset. His eyes went back to their normal, clear violet colour and his face softened.

Lance was shocked by how quickly he'd suppressed whatever it was that he'd been feeling.

The queen moved forward. Her voice was thick with apology "Keith, I'm sorry I-

Keith shook his head. "No, it's okay. I know it was an accident."

Accident? What was an accident? Why was everyone being so vague? Lance wanted to know what the quiznak was happening here and why Keith had just gone from major freak out to major chill.
And why was the queen so apologetic?

"Can I just ask what the hell is going on here." Lance questioned.

He didn't miss Keith and the queen's shared look or the slight narrowing of Keith's eyes.

"I just saw something that I wasn't meant to. That's all." The queen explained.

Lance didn't believe her. He got the feeling that Keith was hiding something from him directly and he didn't like that. He'd drop it for now and address the issue later.

The queen moved on. "Unfortunately, your memories didn't help." She said, addressing Keith. "I'm incapable of healing you immediately, but I have heard of others who recovered from the same injuries. It just takes time."

She looked as though she wanted to say more but she bit her tongue.

Keith nodded in understanding. "Okay. Thanks for trying anyway."

The queen offered a kind smile that seemed to abolish any tension in the room. "Come with me. I'm sure your friends are waiting for you." She reached for her daughter's hand, leading her out of the room.

Lance turned on Keith with an incredulous look. "Are you going to tell me what happened?" He asked.
Keith stared back at him stubbornly. "Maybe I'll explain later."

Lance sighed, taking Keith's reply as a solid no. He couldn't say that he wasn't at least a little disappointed but he'd respect Keith's privacy.

Lance pulled the wheelchair over beside his teammate and lowered him into it. Keith adjusted himself before making his way out the doorframe. Lance wasn't far behind him.

They met up with the rest of the team in the cave where they'd first departed. Shiro and Allura were busy thanking the queen for her efforts and offered her a small device that the Alteans used for communication. "If you ever need our help just press this button right here." Allura pointed to the big blue button that took up the whole top half of the device. Seemed like a no brainer to Lance.

They all said their goodbyes and moved to exit when Lance felt a light tug on his arm. He turned to find that the queen was pulling him back. She glanced over Lance's shoulder to make sure the others weren't watching.

She kept her voice low. "If your friend ever wants to walk again you'll need to help him. He will not help himself."

Lance pulled back to look her directly in the face. "Does this have to do with what you saw?" He asked, his voice barely a whisper.

The queen nodded slowly before gesturing for Lance to catch up with his friends.

Lance looked back over his shoulder at the queen. Her words echoing in his head. 'He will not help himself.' What had she seen in Keith's memories that would make her say such a thing?

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading. Sorry if this chapter was a bit messy (I wrote the majority of it in less than two days so it was bound to happen) my next update may be slightly late due to some upcoming exams :(.

Thanks again for all the lovely comments and kudos.

Feel free to let me know what you think of this chapter too!
Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

Ayyo, kind of a short chapter this time, sorry.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Lance sat on the floor with his legs crossed beneath him. In front of him was a tall chunk of metal with buttons on it. He had no idea what it was or how it worked and Pidge and Hunk wouldn't share. They'd been building it for days yet refused to tell him what it did.

Lance wasn't too fussed on knowing about their little experiments, it was probably just another upgrade for their lions or something.

"Have you seen Keith lately?" Pidge asked, fiddling with some electrical wires.

Lance huffed. He hadn't seen Keith for a while. The paladin had been making himself scarce and mainly just hung around in his room doing who knows what.

Lance had refrained himself from bugging Keith so the only times he actually saw him were during meals. Even then Shiro had to drag him out of his room. Lance wondered if maybe Keith was planning something.

Shiro had let it slip that he was not happy with Keith's behaviour. Apparently Keith wasn't even talking to him anymore but no one knew why except for Shiro.

After what had happened on Bannukan Lance found himself pondering what the queen had said. He desperately wanted to know what she'd seen in Keith's memories. He also wanted to help Keith get back to normal.

He'd noticed the tension amongst the group in the last several days. No one was sure about how to move forward and they desperately needed someone to pilot the red lion. Lance had personally hoped that Keith would continue as her paladin but he wasn't sure if Keith even wanted that.

Keith's absence wasn't helping either. Everyday that he spent away from the team seemed to add another brick to the wall he was building around himself.

"Haven't seen him since breakfast." Lance replied.

Pidge looked displeased with this information. She hadn't exactly been all that quiet about how she felt. She was constantly calling Keith out for distancing himself from the group.

While Lance didn't agree with her whining, he did agree that Keith should at least come out of his room every so often. He kind of missed him.

"Maybe you should go and talk to him." She said after a while. Lance lifted his head to stare at her. He wasn't sure whether her expression was sincere or not.
Hunk agreed with her. "Yeah, you might be able to figure out what's wrong with him."

"What!" Lance asked, his voice louder than he meant. "Why don't you go and talk to him."

Pidge shook her head. Pointing a finger at Lance. "No way. I am not equipped with the skills to talk to an angsty Keith."

Lance threw his hands up dramatically. "What makes you think that I am?" He asked, outraged. He was sure Pidge was just volunteering him because she didn't want to do it herself. "We can't go ten minutes without getting into an argument. I'll just piss him off even more."

"He listens to you though. You might be able to annoy him into confessing his deepest secrets." Hunk offered.

Lance shook his head. "If Shiro can't get through to him then I have no hope."

He shoved his hands in his pockets. He did not want to go and get rejected by Keith.

Pidge shrugged. "It's something to think about at least."

Lance wished she hadn't said that. Her words were giving him dumb ideas.

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Keith sat solemnly on his bed, cleaning his sword for what must have been the hundredth time that day. He was going mental with loneliness. He hadn't really talked to anyone in days, not properly anyway. How he'd survived so long in the desert by himself was a mystery to even him.

His conversation with Shiro the other day had clearly been a mistake. He should have known that Shiro wouldn't agree with him and of course Keith had to dig himself an even bigger hole by threatening to ignore Shiro until he changed his mind. Why did he always get himself into these situations?

To add insult to injury he was struggling to even perform normal daily tasks. Washing himself without the use of his legs was possibly the hardest thing he'd ever done. He either had to drag himself in and out of a slippery Altean bathtub or figure out a way of showering without standing up. He'd stick with the bath for now.

He could barely reach his own sink, it took him almost twenty minutes to pull his pants on in the morning and now he was too short to look at himself in the mirror to make sure he didn't look as shitty as he felt. In all honesty, he was a mess.

He regretted pushing Shiro away but he was still mad with him. Of course Shiro was just being a supportive friend as per usual.

He'd meant what he said though. They needed to find a new paladin to replace him. Shiro was putting the team at a huge disadvantage by not considering this. The only reason Keith kept locking himself in his room was because he wanted the others to get annoyed with him. Maybe then they'd stop screwing around and go look for someone who could actually pilot red.
Keith received a knock on his door at around mid day. Usually Shiro came to drag him to lunch a bit later than this. He knew that Coran always served lunch right at midday so Shiro's early appearance could only mean that he wanted to talk.

"I already told you Shiro. I'm not talking until you change your mind." He yelled through the door. Hopefully loud enough to scared their leader off.

"Actually, it's Lance."

Lance. What the heck was he doing here? Maybe Shiro had sent him to collect Keith for lunch. He must've given up on him. Good.

"Are you gonna invite me in, or not?" Lance asked in an irritated tone.

"Whatever, come in." Keith grumbled in reply. He put his sword aside and waited for Lance to come in.

Lance looked surprisingly nervous when he saw Keith. He was dressed in his usual earth clothes, shoulders tight with anxiety. In his hand he clutched some kind of Altean technology.

"Hey," he said casually before plopping down next to Keith. Typical Lance, making himself at home.

"What's up?" Keith asked skeptically. He wondered what Lance was up to.

"I just thought you might want some company." Lance shrugged. "Honestly I would've dropped by earlier but I thought you'd tell me to go away."

Keith didn't believe him. Lance was up to something for sure. He narrowed his eyes at the device in Lance's hand. "What's that for then?" He asked.

Lance dropped his gaze to the device he was holding. He passed it over to Keith. "I was just looking through some Altean files. Thought you might be interested in reading them."

Lance hit one of the buttons and the device expanded in Keith's palms. Somehow it had turned into a display screen around the size of a book. On the screen was a bunch of writing that he could surprisingly read.

Keith glanced at Lance before reading the first line. Written in bold text were the words, 'spinal injury rehabilitation'.

Keith pouted and turned to Lance for an explanation.

Lance didn't seem happy with this response. "Come on Keith." He whined. "You can't just sit in here ignoring everyone for the rest of your life."

Keith stared at him, trying to figure out what he wanted to say. He felt the urge to share his thoughts on finding a new paladin for red. He refrained, Lance wouldn't understand.

Lance's features twisted into an irritated scowl. "Why won't you at least try?" His voice rose.

Keith blinked at him. "Try what?" He asked.

"Anything!" Lance shouted. Keith was stunned by his sudden burst of anger. He felt the desire to fight Lance. "You've just given up on yourself."
Keith gritted his teeth. Who was Lance to judge him like this? Keith hadn't given up on anything. "I have not!" Keith shouted back.

"Then what are you waiting around for?" Lance stood in frustration. Keith wished he could stand up and get in Lance's face. He felt the anger and frustration from the past week burn through him all at once. He wasn't angry at Lance but he'd sure as hell take it out on him. Even if it was selfish. He didn't care.

"Maybe I'm waiting for everyone else to move on." He hissed. "I can't even walk Lance! Yet for some reason you all think I'm just going to miraculously heal overnight and everything will go back to normal. Well, sorry, that's not how life works!"

Lance's tone was sharp and threatening. "So, what, you want us to give up on you and go find someone else to take your place?"

"That's exactly what I want." Keith scowled back at his teammate. To Keith's surprise, Lance's face softened. They stared at each other for a moment. Keith was still gritting his teeth.

"That's what she saw in your memories, wasn't it." He asked. Keith could almost see the cogs moving in his brain. "She knew that you'd given up already."

Keith bit his lip. That was only the half of it. The queen had recognised something horrible inside him that Keith hadn't even realised he had. She'd seen exactly how weak he was and it scared him, because he'd seen it too.

He sighed. "I haven't given up Lance. I just think it's pointless for you all to be waiting around when you could be looking for a more capable paladin."

Lance sat down again. His eyes searched Keith's face and when their eyes met Keith felt the fight drain out of him. He dropped his gaze.

"That's really what you want?" Lance asked, his voice low.

"Yes, that's what I want." Of course Keith still wanted to be a paladin. He still wanted to pilot red, but he couldn't stand the fact that he was delaying the teams progress. Every day that Zarkon continued to reign, hundreds of innocent people died. Keith didn't want that kind of weight resting on his shoulders.

"Okay." Lance nodded, thinking it through. "If we decide to look for a new paladin, will you stop moping around and start helping yourself."

"Well, yeah, but Shiro won't agree with that. I already tried to convince him."

"Then you'll just have to try again." Lance shrugged. As if convincing Shiro to give up on Keith and go find a replacement would be easy.

--

Lunch had gone down relatively smoothly in the end. They'd all been happily eating away when Keith brought up his opinions. He was actually pretty nervous to be making the announcement and it really showed.
"I think you should find a new paladin." He blurted, unable to contain himself.

Shiro dropped his spoon in his bowl and turned on Keith. The others stopped their chewing to look at him with surprise. Except for Lance who'd already known what was coming. He just kept eating as if nothing had happened.

"We've been over this Keith." Shiro said in irritation.

"Well this isn't your decision." Keith replied. "I want to know what everyone else thinks."

The room was quiet for a long moment. Each of his friends looking around to see who would speak first. Allura spoke up. "Why do you say that?" She asked, addressing Keith.

Now was Keith's opportunity to explain himself. "I can't pilot red anymore." He leaned forward. "So we can't form Voltron. I don't want everyone waiting around for me to finally recover, if that even happens, while Zarkon's still out there taking innocent lives."

The room was quiet again. "It is not an easy task, finding a new paladin. We may not be able to find one to replace you." Allura replied. Shiro turned to her with a betrayed look on his face, as though he couldn't believe she was considering it.

Wait, she was actually considering it?

"We're better off at least trying than sitting here waiting for a miracle." Keith argued.

The others seemed unsure so Lance came into the conversation. "While we're searching for a new paladin, Keith said he'd work on figuring out how to get his legs working again, in case we can't find anyone. I'll help him myself if I have to."

This seemed to get the others consideration, even Shiro's. Keith stared at Lance across the table, shooting him a thankful look. His thanks was reciprocated with a nod.

"Where would we even look?" Pidge asked no one in particular.

"I'm not entirely sure." Allura answered. She turned to Keith. "Are you certain that this is what you want? Just know that the red lion will not take you back once it finds a new paladin."

"I understand that." Keith insisted.

"Well, if anyone disagree's then you better speak up now." Allura gave Shiro a pointed look.

He shook his head. "I don't like it, but I can't argue with the logic."

Keith never thought the day would come when he'd be happy to hear that he was being replaced. It was a bittersweet moment.

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Keith found himself chatting with Lance after lunch -or more like Lance was talking a whole bunch and Keith was just listening. He didn't really mind. He was a lot less stressed now that the others had agree to search for a new paladin. Plus, socialising seemed to help too.
Lance smirked at him. "Now that I'm your assigned rehabilitate-"

"Nope."

"-you'll have to start listening to what I say." Lance pointed a finger at him in warning. Keith rolled his eyes. "Rehab will commence every morning at seven am and will continue until I see obvious signs of improvement."

Seven am? Everyday! That meant Keith would have to wake up at around six every morning just to account for the time it took him to pull his freaking pants on. Who did Lance think he was. He thought about complaining but then he remembered that the team did training drills at eight am which meant that seven was the only time they could fit in unless he wanted to do this after paladin training. Also, Lance was giving up his own free time to help Keith out, which, Keith very much appreciated -he was still unsure why Lance kept volunteering to do things for him though. But, there was no way Keith could do this on his own, he wouldn't even know where to start. So he couldn't really complain about the time.

"Would you stop calling it rehab, you're making me feel like I'm some kind of drug addict." Keith complained. If he couldn't whinge about having to get up super early, at least he could whinge about something else.

Lance scoffed vividly. "What do you want to call it then?" He placed his hands on his hips exaggeratedly.

Keith pouted. "I don't know." Just anything other than rehab was fine with him.

Lance tapped his chin in concentration before grinning. "How about Operation: stop being such a whiny bitch."

Keith flipped him off gracefully.

"Anyway," Lance said, changing the subject. "You missed so much drama while you were having your major angst fest." He explained.

Keith glared at him. Maybe he should've gone back to his room instead. "Please, do tell. What drama did I miss?"

Lance grinned. "Well, first off, Hunk had a major culinary disaster the other day." Keith nodded in interest. Lance continued, using his hands to explain. Keith always ended up with head spin when Lance told him stories. He got so into it, and his hands moved so fast. Keith secretly found it quite intriguing when Lance got excited. "It was crazy. He nearly blew up the entire castle in an attempt to make just one space burrito."

"Wow!" Keith replied in mock surprise.

"Don't sass me, Mullet." He then went on to tell Keith, in detail, how he had run in and put out the fire himself and how it was so badass. Keith knew he was full of shit. No doubt Lance had run in there screaming, but he didn't say anything. It was worth it to see the proud grin on Lance's face.

They talked for a long time. Keith didn't know why they were chatting, usually by now they would've gotten into an argument and been at each other's throats. Instead, Keith was actually enjoying Lance's company -maybe a little too much- and when Lance did finally leave, Keith was disappointed.
He shook his head, any weird feelings he felt toward Lance were pushed to the back of his mind. He didn't want to think about them right now.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading this chapter. As usual, comments, kudos etc are always welcome and highly appreciated. Also, if you have any questions about the story be sure to ask :)

Next chapter should be up pretty soon actually. Depends how much free time I have so we'll see what happens. Love ya'll, you're amazing!
Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

Heyyo. I'm super sorry that it took so long to update this chapter. I know some of you said you were hanging out for the next update and I feel bad for making y'all wait so long.

Alas, it is here. Enjoy!

(Just a warning: there's a bit of swearing in this chapter)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Keith thought he'd prepared himself for this but he really hadn't. Not in the slightest. He'd had little idea what Lance would have him doing today and it definitely did not include this.

"Get that look off your face, Mullet." Lance said with a raised eyebrow. Keith glared up at him from his position on the floor. He didn't know how Lance was so energetic at this time in the morning. Lance looked just as fresh and bright as ever.

Keith, however, felt like absolute garbage. Some time last night he'd started feeling aches throughout both of his legs. At first he'd thought it was a good sign, feeling pain was better than feeling nothing, right? Apparently not. He'd barely gotten any sleep and the pain just seemed to get more uncomfortable with time.

He'd considered telling Lance to see what he thought but he didn't want to worry him. If it got any worse he'd tell someone.

"Why am I lying on the floor?" Keith asked. He didn't bother wiping the annoyed look off his face. Lance knelt beside him, placing his hands in his lap. Next to him was that same Altean device that Lance had showed him the day before. The screen was turned on and Keith could see a bunch of words and pictures.

"Would you prefer to do this standing up?" Lance teased.

"Hey!" Keith growled at him. "That's not funny." He would've kicked Lance if that were an option.

"Whatever." Lance rolled his eyes. "Are you going to let me help you or not?"

Keith crossed his arms over his chest. "Depends. What exactly do you have planned?"

Lance picked up the device and handed it to him. "I found some exercises. Apparently if you get your legs moving it will build muscle memory or something, which is meant to be a good thing." He shrugged.

Wow, he sounded real sure of himself.

Keith stared at the screen. There was a picture next to the text of two aliens, demonstrating some kind of exercise. He turned his head to look at Lance. "These are aliens." He pointed out.
"What, really?" Lance asked sarcastically.

Keith handed back the device forcibly. He didn't appreciate Lance's sarcasm. "How do you know it will work on humans?"

"I don't, but do you have any better ideas?" Lance put the device aside again, shuffling closer to Keith. Keith's lack of reply was enough of an answer. "Exactly, so stop complaining."

"Fine." Keith mumbled, uncrossing his arms.

"Good, now tell me if anything hurts." Lance looked him in the eye seriously, he then reached for Keith's left leg. One hand around his ankle, the other under his calf. For once, Keith was glad he couldn't feel his legs. Otherwise, this whole experience would have been one hundred times more awkward than it was.

Lance proceeded to lift Keith's leg until it was at a ninety degree angle, his calf still horizontal to the ground. His face was a painting of concentration. Keith tried his best not to look at Lance, it would make things more awkward. Unfortunately his brain decided that there was nothing better to look at.

Lance looked to Keith for any signs of discomfort before pulling Keith's leg slowly toward him until his knee was touching the ground. Keith was forced to lie on his side.

What an awkward position. Keith couldn't help but pull a face, he tried to hide the heat in his cheeks. Lance didn't seem to notice. After holding him there for a few seconds Lance reversed the steps until Keith was lying flat again.

He quirked an eyebrow at Keith. "I feel like I'm warming you up for a yoga lesson."

Keith laughed nervously. This was so weird. He noticed a blush on Lance's face too, at least he wasn't the only one feeling uncomfortable. "Too bad they don't have any scented candles in space. It's not yoga without the candles."

Lance nodded. "Or those yoga mats, we could have a team yoga session." He fought off a smile. "I think Shiro would make a great yoga instructor."

Keith genuinely laughed at that, feeling some of the awkwardness fall away. Just the thought of Shiro in gym tights and a tank top was enough to set him off. Lance chuckled.

Lance insisted on repeating the exact same exercise five times on each side. Keith wondered if this was just because he didn't know any other exercises. He didn't feel anything change throughout the whole process. Not that he'd been expecting results so early on. Plus, Lance literally had no idea what he was doing so it was hard to say that Keith expected any results at all. He tried to keep an open mind.

They moved on to some different stretches, keeping up a light conversation to make things less awkward. Finally they'd reached the last thing on Lance's list.

"That's all I got for today." Lance sighed, offering his hand to help Keith up.

Keith took his hand. "Just stretching?" He asked. He wasn't complaining, just curious. He pulled his legs in and crossed them underneath him. Lance sat back with his hands behind him.

"What, you think I'd have you running laps by now?"

"Of course not." Keith brushed off the stupid comment. "I was just wondering what interesting
things you have planned for tomorrow."

Lance narrowed his eyes. "You'll just have to wait and see."

They both lapsed into silence after that. Keith watched Lance pick at the stitching in his shoes absently.

Keith wondered, again, why Lance was helping him. He wasn't sure why he wanted to know so badly, it just kept popping up in his thoughts.

Maybe it was just Lances sense of duty toward the team. Helping Keith, in a way still meant he was contributing to the team at first. But, now that they were looking for a new paladin it didn't make sense for him to be putting extra effort into helping him out.

He hoped it wasn't just because Lance felt bad for him. That would only make Keith feel bad for wasting his time.

"What are you thinking about over there?" Lance's voice broke through his train of thought.

Keith raised his own eyes to look into Lance's. Lance seemed genuinely interested, his head quirked slightly, blue eyes wide.

Keith couldn't help but find it cute.

He grimaced. "Why are you helping me?" His voice came out flat, not how he'd wanted it to. He blamed his nerves.

Lance furrowed his eyebrows momentarily. He shook his head in confusion. "Why wouldn't I?"

Keith's grimace turned into a mix between a pout and a pucker. "I didn't mean.." Keith wracked his brain for the right words. He knew what he wanted to ask but he didn't know how to ask it without Lance calling him out for being a dumbass. "I- it's just.. usually you're doing everything you can to piss me off-" Lance laughed at that. "And now you're being really.. nice?"

Saying it aloud really seemed to hit home. Lance was being incredibly helpful. So much so that Keith almost expected him to come knocking at his door every five seconds to see if he was okay, he'd already done it twice before. It was stupid but Lance seemed to know exactly the right things to say to make him feel less shitty and he was always saying them at the right time too.

Just like how he knew exactly how to get him riled up, he also knew how to calm him down.

Anyway, Keith found it extremely out of character for Lance to be actively seeking out ways to help him.

A light pout found its way onto Lance's face. Signifying his confusion regarding the matter. Keith waited impatiently for Lance to figure it out. When he finally did his cheeks blushed a barely noticeable pink colour. "I guess I-"

Shiro strode in just then. Keith was considering asking him to go away so that Lance could finish his sentence but he didn't. Instead Keith was left wondering, again, why the heck Lance was being so nice.

Lance, on the other hand, looked relieved that their conversation had been disrupted. Only leaving Keith to ponder what he'd been about to say.

The others went on to do their usual paladin activities while Keith watched from the control room
with Allura and Coran. It was bizarre watching from up there. Usually he was down there with the rest of them, getting his ass kicked. Getting his ass kicked with his team.

The next three days went by quite uneventfully. The team had landed on two separate planets in search of a new paladin. All attempts had been in vain, red wasn't letting anyone else in.

Keith continued to feel guilty as he watched from the sidelines. On the way to one of the planets the team had come into contact with a small fleet of Galra ships. The fleet would have been easily taken care of if they could just form voltron. Instead, the battle was long and Pidge even ended up taking some damage to her lion, she was fine but Keith could only think about how the situation would be avoided if he could just get his legs working enough to pilot his lion.

After that Keith started searching for exercises that he could perform independently, in attempt to speed up his recovery. He asked Lance if he had any ideas, the boy had this huge grin on his face like he knew something Keith didn't. Keith still had no idea what that meant but Lance offered him some exercises that he'd come across.

Though there were no noticeable improvements in Keith's physical health, he had started to notice that movement really helped with the pain he'd been feeling in his legs. Lance had mentioned once that sitting around all day can cause joint pain and stuff like that, the exercises helped with that.

He and Lance still continued with 'Operation: stop being such a whiny bitch' as Lance insisted on calling it. It was actually a good way for them to bond, they still bickered and argued but Keith learned a lot about Lance just through general conversation. Like how he named his dog Shakira when he was twelve because when it wagged it's tail the whole back half of its body moved like Shakira's hips (that had gotten a good laugh out of both of them)

It wasn't as awkward as it had been previously. Keith still felt weird about the whole touching thing but he pushed that aside after a while. He and Lance were becoming friendly, which was an almost impossible concept for Keith to get his head around.

Keith woke to a knock on his door. Without even contemplating who was there he grumbled out a "What?" The door clicked open and Keith blinked his eyes open. It was Lance, unsurprisingly. He was the only one stupid enough to bother Keith in the morning.

Lance walked in with two large towels tucked against his chest. He stared down at Keith who became very aware that he'd just woken up and he most likely looked like garbage.

"Why are you not up yet?" Lance asked casually.

Keith looked past him at the digital clock built into his wall. He pointed at it. "It's only six O'clock. You're an hour early." He huffed falling back against the comfort of his bed and closing his eyes.
Keith felt something whip him on the arm. He opened his eyes again, this time with a scowl on his face. What he saw knocked the breath out of him. Lance stood with one towel, folded in his left hand, and the other towel was dangling in his right hand, ready to hit Keith again. Now that the towels were not covering Lance's chest, Keith realised that he was half nude. "LANCE WHAT THE FUCK-"

"Jesus Christ! Shut up there's people still sleeping"

"ARE YOU FUCKING SHIRTLESS?!!" Keith screamed and threw his hands over his eyes to block the view of Lance's bare chest. Why the heck was Lance shirtless in his room at this ungodly hour in the morning?


The beating continued until Keith had crawled underneath his covers to break the force of Lance's attacks. "What do you want!" He shouted over the sound of Lance's towel whacking at his bedsheets.

"Its rehab time asshole. We're trying hydrotherapy." Lance said, halting his malicious attacks.

Keith scrunched his eyebrows together. Hydrotherapy... "You mean swimming?" He shouted. That would explain Lance's choice of apparel, or lack of.

"Well duh." Lance replied loudly.

Then there was a banging on the wall that shocked Keith out of his hiding spot and Pidge was shouting insults from the next room. "Keith. Lance. Shut the hell up you pair of quiznaks!"

Keith glared at Lance who looked only partially guilty. "Sorry Pidge." He shouted before whipping Keith one last time. Keith jumped.

"I'm not going swimming with you, psychopath." He whispered pointing at Lance's chest which he thoroughly avoided with his eyes. He would not be subjected to Lance's nipples at this time in the morning. "You'll probably try and drown me."

Lance gasped dramatically. "How dare you." He said placing a hand over his chest. "After all I've done for you."

"What, like coming into my room at six am and beating the shit out of me?" Keith argued. He wasn't mad, well maybe he was a little grumpy, but he could definitely put on a scowl.

Lance pointed at him. "I was beating some sense into you, mullet." He replied, squinting at Keith. "Now, get changed and fix that birds nest on your head. I'll be back in ten minutes."

Keith opened his mouth to argue but Lance was already out the door. He had a bad feeling about this whole hydrotherapy thing. Why? Might you ask. Maybe because he couldn't move his damn legs! Keith was about ninety percent sure that legs were an essential part of swimming. Keith was about to drown, he could see it happening. Lance would laugh at him from the poolside.

He reluctantly changed into his swim shorts and fixed his hair, which wasn't even that bad this morning, Lance had just been teasing him as usual.

Keith was met by a towel to the face as he exited his room. Honestly, he'd been expecting it but he
still took pleasure in punching the culprit vengefully in the thigh.

"Ow!" Lance shouted, rubbing at his thigh. "Jeez, just cause your legs don't work, doesn't mean you have to break mine."

Keith stared up at him. He squinted at the tall boy, considering the irony of the situation. "Lance. You just whipped the shit out of me with a towel. You have no right to complain right now." Before Lance had the ability to reply, he continued. "On the topic of legs not working; why the fuck are we going swimming."

Lance turned away to move in the direction of the pool. Keith followed him. "You can swim with your arms dumbass." Lance replied. "Fish don't have legs and they manage." He shrugged.

Keith stopped for a moment to keep himself from screaming. "You idiot," he barked. Moving to catch up again. "Fish have a tail and fins."

Lance chuckled. "And you have me, I won't let you drown." He smirked.

Keith did not trust him, especially with that dumb look on his face. "I'm gonna die." He murmured.

When they entered the room to the castle pool, Keith was instantly hit by the smell of chlorine. He hadn't spent a lot of time at public pools back home but he'd know that smell anywhere.

"Ugh. Smells like the kiddie pools back on earth."

"I like it." Lance said wistfully.

Keith quirked his eyebrows. How could Lance like such a horrible smell? "You know they crap in those pools, right?"

Lance scoffed. "The poop smell adds to the authenticity." He countered.

Now it was Keith's turn to scoff. "If you say so."

As they rounded one side of the pool, one thing became very clear to Keith. He wasn't going to make it into that pool on his own. Not without a long struggle.

Keith wasn't sure why he'd agreed to this, so far it hadn't been the best experience. Getting beat up in his own bedroom, being yelled at by his gremlin neighbour, being subjected to Lance's bare chest (which, by the way, he was still avoiding with his eyes) and now he was stuck in a wheelchair, trying to think of a way to get from here, to a pool several feet away. It had been a rough morning for Keith so please excuse his self pity.

Lance seemed to notice, of course he did. "You need some help over there?" He asked, amused.

"No." Keith replied out of spite.

Lance huffed, throwing his towel over one of the poles by the pool. He approached Keith and wasted no time hooking his arms under Keith's legs and around his torso. He lifted him with minimal effort and began moving toward the pool.

Keith couldn't help the heat rising in his cheeks. Oh gosh no. He was touching so much of Lance's bare skin. Sheesh, was it just him or was it starting to get real hot in here. Wow. Another thing to add to his list of unfortunate events this morning. Surely Lance could feel the heat coming from him, he was burning up like the freaking sun.
"I'm starting to get the idea that you like carrying me around." Keith didn't look at Lance. He didn't want to see his expression.

"Why would you say that?" Lance asked. Good question; Why did Keith say that? Okay, now Keith had to look at him. Lance was looking down at him, eyebrows raised. If Keith stared hard enough he could see a light blush on Lance's tan skin.

Keith shrugged with a mischievous grin. Suddenly his expression was being mirrored on Lance's face as the boy looked down at the pool below him then back at Keith.

Keith noticed Lance turn and take a step away from the pool. "Lance what are you-"

Keith didn't get to finish. He was airborne. That idiot had flung him into thin air. He let loose a pitiful scream and then he hit cold water. Keith held his breath as he became submerged. His first instinct was to kick his legs out. Of course that didn't work so he cut through the water with his arms instead.

When his head finally broke the surface of the water, he was subjected to Lance's ridiculous snorting.

"You stupid Ass." Keith yelled once he'd caught his breath. He waved his fist in the air, almost drowning in the process. Lance laughed even harder and Keith bristled.

So one thing that Lance's stupid idea had confirmed was that Keith could in fact swim without his legs. It was difficult and strenuous but he could do it.

Keith used these new findings to paddle over to Lance and drag his ass into the pool. The noise that escaped Lance's mouth was worthy of blackmail.

Keith laughed as Lance flapped around in the water frantically. He was like a long floppy fish and it was hilarious. That sight alone was enough to make Keith's day as he continued to chuckle even when Lance came back up and started swearing at him.

After a prolonged water fight (Keith lost because of his obvious disadvantage) they actually got to doing some variation of rehab.

Several times Lance suggested that they find some kind of floating device for Keith, preferably the ones for toddlers that go around your arms. They resorted to Keith holding onto Lance's shoulders when he no longer had the strength to keep himself above the water. Lance seemed okay with this but Keith wasn't. He could feel how smooth Lance's skin was and how strong his muscles were and wow, when did Lance's shoulders get so broad?

Lance had mentioned that he was a competitive swimmer back in high school and Keith could tell by the shape of his body that he was a good one. It was like he was built for water instead of land. It seemed fitting that he be the water paladin.

Although Keith couldn't physically move his legs, he could somewhat feel the sensation of them moving through the water. It was hard to explain but whatever it was he found it reassuring. As they moved through the exercises, Keith actually started to enjoy the water. He wasn't as restricted as he had been outside of the pool. His legs still didn't work but they didn't really weigh him down in the water.

He was a little reluctant to get out of the pool. Partially because it was cold when he climbed out. Not at all because he'd enjoyed being in the pool.. with Lance.

Lance got out and grabbed both their towels while Keith waited at the side of the pool, legs dangling in the water. Lance dumped a towel on Keith's head and sat down beside, mimicking Keith's
position. He had a towel wrapped around him to keep himself from shivering.

"Do you miss earth?" He asked as Keith removed the towel from his own head and wrapped it tightly around his shoulders. He looked to Lance, who was staring at him. His blue eyes searched Keith for an answer.

"I guess, sometimes," He replied. He didn't really miss the planet and he didn't have anyone left to miss on earth. The only part of earth that he really missed was the memories that he made there. Well, some of them, at least. "There wasn't really much left for me on earth though. Everyone I care about is in this castle."

Lance listened contently. He smiled when Keith finished. "Six people and four mice, they're the only things you care about?"

Keith smirked. That's not what he'd meant at all but he was happy to play along. "Well, five people actually, and the mice of course. I never said I cared about everyone in the castle."

Lance squinted at him. "But you said-"

"That everyone I care about is in this castle. Not that I care about everyone in the castle."

"And I bet you're gonna say the unlucky person is me, isn't it?" Lance rolled his eyes dramatically, mocking disgrace.

Keith shrugged and Lance put on a pout. "But Keith.. I thought we were friends." Lance pointed between the two of them. He'd initiated his whiny tone which Keith hated so very much.

"Umm. No. Not after that stunt you pulled this morning." Keith replied. Referring to his vivid memories of the morning's events.

"Oh come on! You're still salty about that?" Lance complained.

"Saltier than the sea."

Lance huffed. "Unbelievable." He shook his head a few times before he glimpsed something over Keith's shoulder and grinned devilishly, completely abandoning his previous wallowing. Keith barely got to interpret his expression before Lance was scrambling to his feet.

"Well if we're not friends anymore," he said, moving toward Keith's wheelchair. Keith followed him with his eyes. "I'll just have to take back my friendship gifts." He grabbed onto the handle's of the wheelchair. Sticking his chin in the air as he began to wheel it out of the room.

"Wait, no." Keith was giggling like a child now. Gosh, why was Lance such an ass. He reached out for Lance as the other boy swiftly moved passed him with a victorious grin on his face. "Lance, I'm sorry. Please come back." Keith whined. If Lance didn't come back with his wheelchair Keith would be stuck sitting by the pool for weeks before anyone found him. "I'll care about you if you bring that chair back. I'll even put you above the mice."

Lance turned quickly and grinned. "That's what I'm talking about." He beamed and Keith was snorting at him.

Keith would never admit to Lance just how important he was to him. He did care about Lance. He cared a lot.
Hi again. Hope you enjoyed the chapter, my next update shouldn't take as long hopefully.

Just wanted to say thank you again to everyone who leaves kudos and comments and all the rest. I just reached 1000 views on this fic which is absolutely amazing.

Also, I just made a tumblr account if you want to check that out, I'll be posting some of my crappy fanart and maybe some stuff about this fic on there. My username is the same (immiams)

Anyway, feel free to let me know what you think of the story so far (I love reading your lovely comments) and have a great day!

Bye!
Another small chapter this time, sorry.

I feel like this story is finally getting somewhere in terms of plot which is a relief.

Anyway, enjoy :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Wait. Are you serious?"

"Uh, yeah.. why, is that weird.?" Keith stared at him like he was an idiot for even bringing it up. He reached forward to wrap his hands around the toes of his boots. He did it without even straining. Lance had never realised how flexible Keith was. Damn.

They're both seated on the hard floor of the training deck, Lance stretching in preparation for paladin training, Keith just stretching cause he's Keith.

They'd been there for almost two hours already and Lance had run out of planned exercises so they were left to wait for the others to arrive.

"I can't believe this." Lance slapped a hand over his face. "Of course it's weird! What kind of childhood did you have?"

"One without fat ogres and talking donkeys?" Keith shook his head quizzically.

Lance crossed his arms over his chest. "Oh, I see. So you haven't watched the movie but you know all about it. Seems fake to me."

Keith smirked. "Just cause I know the main characters doesn't mean I've seen it." Keith replied, easing out of the stretch. "What's so good about this dumb movie anyway?"

Lance's jaw dropped dramatically wide. "Shrek is a visual and theoretical masterpiece you uncultured swine."

"Seeing as that's coming from you, I'll take it as an overstatement." Keith was still smirking. That asshole. How dare he insult Shrek like that!

Lance poked him in the leg. "Hey!" He barked. Keith's leg flinched at the contact. "I'm serious Shrek is quite possibly the bes-" Keith was staring intensely down at his leg. His eyes were wide with shock.

Lance stared at him with his eyebrows raised in question. Keith wasn't paying him any attention. He resorted to looking between Keith and whatever had his attention, back and forth like he was watching a tennis match. "What?" Lance finally asked.

Keith slowly lifted his eyes up to meet Lance's confused gaze. "Do it again."
"Wh-" Wait. Had Keith's leg actually flinched away. His legs that were MEANT TO BE PARALYSED. Lance thought he'd imagined it or something.

Lance jabbed him in the thigh again and sure enough Keith flinched again. It was a reflexive flinch and the movement was hardly noticeable but IT WAS THERE. The immovable legs had freaking moved. He was sure, he'd seen it with his own eyes.

"Are you shitting me?" Lance asked. He turned his attention to Keith's face and that look.. holy shit.. Keith was beaming. Lance was hit by the full force of Keith's brilliant grin. Before he knew it his heart was doing backflips in his chest.

It was worth it. One less hour of beauty sleep in the morning, hours spent scouring the space web for some kind of way to help Keith. Listening to Keith talk crap about his boy Shrek. Everything. It was worth it just to see that fucking smile on his friend's face.

Lance was awestruck. He'd never seen Keith look so.. excited? Hopeful? The way his lips parted to show off that big toothy grin and his eyes were so light.. and he had this look in his eye... like Lance had just hung the stars in the sky or something ridiculous like that.

Screw the backflips, Lance's acrobatic heart had moved on to bigger and better things by now. Who knows what his heart was doing. Lance sure didn't care.

Keith's grin was infectious. Soon enough Lance felt a tug at the side of his mouth and he was grinning right back at his teammate.

Lance felt his chest swell with pride. He'd caused that. He'd put effort into helping Keith. He'd graced Keith's face with that hopeful grin.

They probably looked like a pair of psychopaths sitting theer just smiling. Lance didn't care.

Keith's legs could still move. Not intentionally but they'd proved that it was possible. It was something to build on.

Keith turned his focus towards his legs again. He put his hand over the spot where Lance had poked him and huffed out a laugh.

"Can you feel them?" Lance asked, referring to Keith's legs.

"Yeah I- Yeah. I can"

"What. Just like that?"

Keith shrugged like he didn't really care. He could feel his legs, he was too excited to question it. He still had that goofy smile on his face.

Lance was climbing to his feet. They had to tell the others. They'd be ecstatic.

--

Keith was lying comfortably on one of the double seater couches in the movie room. It wasn't really meant to be a movie room but it was the only room that had the adapters suitable to plug in Pidge's laptop so they could watch movies. So technically, it was the movie room.
Keith was stretched out across the couch on his back, his legs dangling over the edge. He was still on a high from that morning, unable to believe that he could feel his legs. After not feeling anything below the hips for so long it was an almost foreign feeling. Every so often he had to reach out and poke his leg to make sure that he wasn't making things up in his head.

After he and Lance had both gotten over their initial shock, Lance had basically thrown him into his wheelchair and started running around the castle, pushing Keith along as he screamed at everyone to get up.

When they got to Pidge's room Lance didn't even need to knock. She was standing in the doorway with a frightened look on her face. Apparently she'd heard Lance's screaming and thought he was dying.

Lance explained he had only been yelling and screaming because he was excited and after gathering everyone in the command room and sharing the news he asked Pidge if she had Shrek downloaded on her laptop.

Pidge had replied with an irritated. "What kind of heathen do you think I am?" She readjusted her glasses as she stared at him skeptically. "Of course I have Shrek downloaded on my laptop."

Lance turned to give Keith a pointed stare. Keith rolled his eyes.

That's how they'd ended up like this. Keith laying on the double seater. Shiro and Allura situated on the couch next to him and Pidge on the floor connecting her laptop to the projector. After Lance had announced he was going to introduce Keith to the beautiful movie of Shrek, Pidge had complained that she wanted to watch it too. Then Hunk said that he'd tag along and they eventually got Coran, Allura and Shiro to agree on joining them for a movie night.

Hunk, Lance and Coran were in the kitchen preparing snacks for everyone while Pidge set up the movie. Keith couldn't believe Lance had dragged him into this. He blamed his good mood for complying.

"Bingo." Pidge grinned as the projector switched on to show the title screen of her pirated version of the movie.

Lance walked in then with a tray of food in his hands. "Aww yeah." He cheered as he noticed Shrek's big green head on the projector. He placed the food down and offered Pidge a high five. She humoured him and Lance grinned. "You're honestly the greatest thing that has ever graced this universe."

Pidge smirked. "I know."

Lance snatched one of the bowls of food from his tray as the others walked in with even more food. Jesus how were they meant to eat all of that?

"Sheesh, you could feed a whole Balmera with all this food." Keith scoffed. He wondered if Zarkon would accept the food as a peace offering. They could end this war right here and now.

"It's movie etiquette, Keith. You can't sit and watch a two hour movie without snacks." Lance rolled his eyes as if this were common knowledge. "Now move fatty, you're taking up the whole couch."

Keith lifted his head just enough so that Lance could sit before casually dropping his head back on Lance's thigh. Turns out Lance's legs were as boney and uncomfortable as he'd expected.

Lance noticeably tensed and then relaxed. "What am I, another piece of furniture?" He placed the
bowl on Keith's chest. And reached in to grab a handful of whatever food they'd prepared. To
Keith's surprise he didn't actually tell him to get off.

"It's bro etiquette Lance. When your bro needs a pillow, you offer your boney ass leg."

Lance flicked him in the nose. "You're no bro of mine." He taunted with amusement.

Keith scoffed.

"You two look awfully comfortable over there." Hunk offered.

Allura whispered to Shiro but made sure it was loud enough for everyone to hear. "I think they're
actually getting along for once." She whisper shouted behind her hand.

Keith thought about that for a moment. He tried to think back to the time when Lance use to get on
his nerves. It was weird to think about. Of course they still bickered like children but they'd come
such a long way since then, so far that Keith now considered Lance a good friend.

He wondered if there was room to go any further than friends. Keith wouldn't admit it to anyone that
part of him wanted that. He was constantly thinking about Lance and his dumb cute little smiles, and
how friendly he was, and how, although he was always careful, he didn't treat Keith like he was
fragile.

Keith was like a twelve year old girl with a crush. It was disgusting.

He wanted Lance in a lot of ways that Lance wouldn't want him.

That was it. That moment, right there, where Keith was laying on top of Lance. Watching his smirk
turn into a grin and his eyes brighten. That's when Keith realised that he was much further up shit
creek than previously theorised.

His cheeks were suddenly burning again. He gave Hunk a halfhearted thumbs up while Lance just
shrugged. Of course, Keith had been sitting down for so long in his wheelchair that it was becoming
uncomfortable to his butt. He'd take the opportunity to lie down any day. But was that really the
reason why he'd done it? Well that was an entirely different question.

He decided to ignore it for now and sought out a distraction instead.

Keith peered over the edge of the bowl. He didn't recognise the food in there. They were some kind
of little orange cubes. "What is it?" He asked, tilting his head back to look at Lance.

Lance reached for another handful. "Find out for yourself." Lance replied. He dropped a piece over
Keith's head and Keith skillfully caught it in his mouth. He chewed on the crunchy piece of food for a
moment and.. "Taste's like popcorn." He said, looking into the bowl again. It didn't look anything
like popcorn but it sure tasted like it. He reached in for a handful of his own.

"Hunk's secret recipe." Lance shrugged.

"Hunk you're a genius."

"Aww thanks Keith." Hunk replied. He and Coran took a seat on the three seater couch and once
Pidge had finished setting up the movie she sat between them.

"Are you guys ready to have your minds blown?!" Pidge asked. She hit the space bar on her laptop,
playing the movie.
Keith turned to watch the film, still chewing on his space popcorn.

"Once upon a time there was a lovely princess." Shrek narrated.

Allura sat forward. "A Princess!?" She gasped. "I love this movie already."

Everyone laughed. Then there was music and Lance's unexpected rendition of Smash Mouth's 'All Star' scared Keith so much that he almost threw the bowl of space popcorn.

"SomeBODY ONCE TOLD ME THE WORLD IS GONNA ROLL ME!"

Lance was shouting the lyrics and so were Pidge and Hunk. They were ridiculously off key and out of tune. Keith looked up to scowl at Lance. Lance was too busy grinning at his friends who were belting lyrics out on the next couch.

Shiro put his head in his hand's "I can't believe I'm in space, watching Shrek, with a bunch of teenagers." He sighed. "What has my life come to?"

"I like it." Allura grinned. "I have no idea what's going on, but I like it."

Keith huffed out a laugh and turned back to the movie where Shrek was naked in a mud pool. Keith snorted. "Hey Lance, looks like you in the pool yesterday."

Lance jabbed him in the side. Keith squealed and fell on the floor, sacrificing himself to save the space popcorn.

- By the time Shrek had gone to the castle and saved the princess, Lance and Keith had readjusted into a more comfortable seating arrangement. Lance was sitting but he had his head propped up on his palm and ended up leaning up against the side of the couch. Keith was still using Lance's leg as a pillow but he'd flipped onto his side. Half of him was hanging off the lounge yet it was still strangely comfortable.

Lance kept finding excuses to touch Keith's hair throughout the movie. Keith had hit his hand away so many times that he just gave up. Lance was persistent. His hands running through Keith's hair were extremely distracting. He kept pushing the hair up to the top of Keith's head like he was preparing to put it in a ponytail.

"I thought you didn't like the mullet." Keith said, rolling over so that he could look Lance in the face. Lance was holding back amusement as Keith's hair no doubt stuck out like a cockatoo.

"I don't." He said. Reaching down to fix the stray hair. "That's why I'm giving you a Mohawk."

Keith whacked his hand away and shook his hair out before flopping back down on the couch. He wouldn't be seen dead with a Mohawk. He could feel Lance's eyes on him for a while afterwards, making him self conscious. "You're missing the movie." Keith mumbled before stuffing another piece of food in his mouth.

"Oh. Yeah... right."

Throughout the movie they were barraged with questions from the princess.

"What's that?"

"It's a talking donkey."
"Why is there a cookie boy?"

"He's a gingerbread man."

"Who's the guy with the big nose?"

"Pinocchio. His nose grows when he lies."

By the end of the movie Lance had banished Keith from using his thigh as a pillow. Keith was forced to sit there like a normal person.

Even though she didn't understand anything, Allura claimed to like the movie, but made sure to clarify that she was never going to kiss an ogre even if it was true love.

"That was an interesting film." She said clapping her hands together in delight. It seemed that she enjoyed the movie more than Keith had. Not that Keith disliked the movie. It was okay. "What happens next?"

"Well.." Pidge said moving toward her laptop. "There's a sequel-"

"No." Shiro said in his dad voice. "That's not happening."

"Naw. Come on Daaaad." Pidge whined.

"Yeah." Lance called. "Come on Dad!" He threw a piece of space popcorn at Shiro which earned him a warning look from Coran the Castle Cleaner.

Shiro sighed. "I'm too old for this." He stood up and moved toward the door. "You kids do what you want. I'm going to bed."

"Such a party pooper."

"Night Grandpa."

"Night old man!"

"Goodnight dad."

Shiro shook his head and left.

"Everyone up for part 2?" Pidge asked, already tapping away at her computer.

It ended up just being Lance, Keith, Pidge and Allura. The others all bailed out and went to bed. Keith didn't blame them. He had contemplated following their example but decided against it, mostly because he couldn't be bothered getting up.

Allura ran off to grab some blankets and when she returned she sat with Pidge, sharing the blanket between them and threw the other one over for Lance and Keith to share.

Lance was a major blanket hog. Keith had so little blanket that he might as well have not bothered with it at all. The blanket barely even covered his ankles, where as Lance was completely covered up. Keith curled in on himself instead, to preserve body heat and leaned into the side of the couch.

It was comfortable and surprisingly warm. Five minutes into the movie he felt his eyelids drooping. He tried to stay awake but only ten minutes in he'd already fallen asleep.
First thing Keith noticed when he woke was that his neck was killing him. Second thing, he hadn't actually slept through the whole movie.

Keith blinked away the blur in his vision until he could actually somewhat see the screen in front of him. The movie was still playing and he could hear Allura and Pidge chattering quietly nearby. Third thing Keith noticed was that there was something warm and heavy pressed against his side.

Keith turned his head slowly to see what it was. Turns out Lance had somehow managed to drape himself over Keith's side without him noticing, whilst simultaneously hogging eighty percent of the couch and 100% of the blanket.

Keith willed himself to be still as he stared in horror. Lance was sleeping on him, with his arm against Keith's chest and his head resting just above Keith's hip. He looked freaking adorable. Keith's heart started pumping at a million beats per second.

He didn't mean to stare but Lance just looked so damn cute with his hoodie over his head and his cheek squished against Keith's torso. He didn't feel the small smile curling at the side of his mouth.

Sure enough the others caught him being a creep.

"Enjoying the movie?" Pidge asked. Allura snickered.

As a matter of fact, he'd missed almost the entire movie but that had nothing to do with what Pidge was implying. Pidge and Allura both had devilish grins on their faces. They were teasing him, he could tell.

In the absence of a witty comeback Keith just glared at them. Girls were so mean.

Keith was forced to watch the last fifteen minutes of a movie that made absolutely no sense to him at all plot-wise. He managed to stay still enough that Lance didn't stir which meant Keith could steal glances at the napping boy without being caught.

Lance did finally wake up when the movie ended. Most likely because Keith had flicked him in the head.

Lance flinched, Keith felt into through his whole body. He rubbed at his eyes and turned to look at The boy responsible for flicking him. He rested his chin on Keith's rib cage and smiled a little sheepishly.

"Am I the furniture now?" Keith asked, mocking Lance.

"Bro etiquette, Keith. Bro etiquette." Lance voice was quiet, probably still half asleep.

"I thought we weren't bros." Keith teased.

"Yeah, no. We're definitely not." Lance confirmed, pushing off of Keith.

So what were they?

Chapter End Notes
Wuh oh, what's going on here?

Thanks to everyone who's stuck with this fic. I'm finally past the halfway mark which is awesome. All your support really helped me get through writing this so thanks :)

I wrote most of this chapter after watching Keith's vlog lol. I still haven't recovered from the trauma of that experience.
Half of this chapter wasn't even planned at the beginning of the week but it actually turned out working okay I think.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Keith was becoming more and more impatient with himself. It had been over a week since his last breakthrough. He could still feel his legs but they just wouldn't move. He searched tirelessly to find a way of getting them to work, even just a slight movement would be more than enough. He just didn't really know how to make it happen. He had his legs that he could now feel, his brain sending the messages and he could feel the muscle in his legs tensing but they refused to move of their own free will. It was infuriating.

He recognised the pressure he was putting on himself to get something to happen. The team still hadn't found a new paladin for red and they'd started to give up on ever finding one. Even Allura, who had been searching day and night in an attempt to find someone to fit the criteria, was losing interest.

This wasn't good for Keith. He could feel the pressure being placed upon him to come through. If they couldn't find anyone, they'd just have to wait around for him.

Technically the team could still progress with just the four lions. They'd cleared several planets of Galra occupants, but without Voltron they simply could not take on Zarkon.

Keith was trying, he really was, he just didn't know what to do.

Lance kept saying that if they continued trying, something would happen. Keith had believed him at first but now he wasn't so sure. He was just irritated by the whole situation.

He knew that he should be able to move his legs now. He could feel his legs and he could feel movements when he lifted them with assistance but he just couldn't get them to work independently. It must have something to do with his coordination or something. After not being able to move his legs for so long, he'd forgotten how to.

Part of Keith knew that if he was going to make it happen, he was going to have to do it himself.

These thoughts were beginning to have an effect on Keith's sleep schedule. He'd often lay awake at night trying to work through his problems, not realising that he was losing valuable sleep time until it was too late.

Tonight was one of those nights, and after trying for hours Keith gave up and left his room to find an activity to distract himself.

Keith had only been out of his room for a few minutes when he ran into Hunk. Hunk spooked a little when Keith entered the kitchen but instantly relaxed when he saw who it was.

"Oh, hey Keith." Hunk offered a warm smile as he moved over to the sink.
"Hey, sorry. I didn't mean to scare you." Keith replied awkwardly. He hadn't expected to run into anyone and felt like he'd been caught red handed.

"It's not a worry, man. I just didn't expect to see you here." Hunk was busy filling one of the measuring cups with water. "What are you doing up this early?" He asked.

Early? Was it really morning already, Keith hadn't noticed. He wheeled himself further into the room, heading toward the cabinets on the other side of the space.

"Couldn't sleep.. I guess." He opened one of the lower cabinets and pulled out a glass. The glasses had originally been in one of the higher cabinets but Keith wasn't able to reach up there anymore so they'd moved some of the necessities to the lower cabinets. Which was sweet and all but Keith had felt weird about it, like it was a permanent change.

"Me neither." Hunk poured the water into a large mixing bowl along with some other ingredients that Keith didn't recognise. "Cooking helps clear my mind." He motioned toward the food layed out in front of him. Most of it was half used ingredients, though Keith noticed a batch of cookies, cooling off to the side. Hunk must have been up for a while already if he'd already finished making a batch.

Keith could understand that. Usually he would train if he couldn't sleep, working through the motions until he tired himself out enough to not think anymore. Unfortunately, he couldn't do that now.

"What's on your mind?" Keith asked in concern. He hadn't really pegged Hunk as one to let thoughts bother him. Of course, Hunk was usually the most anxious during a battle but as soon as they were out of danger, Hunk was the calmest of them all. Maybe he didn't know as much about his teammates as he previously thought.

Hunk had always seemed pretty open to share what he was thinking but maybe he liked to keep things to himself too.

"Nothing big," Hunk replied. "Just stuff. You?"

"Yeah.." Keith supposed. "Just stuff." Keith filled his cup at the sink and moved out of the way so that Hunk could continue to go about his cooking.

"Did you wanna talk about it?" Hunk asked. He turned away from his cooking to stare at Keith. Keith was surprised by the question. Did he want to talk about it? Not really, but he wasn't sure if it was such a good idea to keep his concerns bottled up all the time. Hunk seemed willing to listen.

Hunk must have noticed his discomfort. "I mean, you don't have to.." He went back to mixing whatever was in his bowl. "Lance said you never talk about your problems, like.." Hunk caught himself as he realised what he'd been saying. He stopped what he was doing and seemed to recalculate. Hunk put his wooden spoon down and placed his hands on the bench top. "Look man, we're worried about you."

Keith scrunched his face up in confusion. Why was Lance talking about Keith's problems with Hunk, did he expect Keith to talk about his problems? Keith wasn't really one for sharing, surely Lance knew that. Also, 'they' were worried about him? Who's they? Why are they worried about him?

"Uhhh, what?" Keith asked, he stared at Hunk with a perplexed expression. He had so many questions that he was unable to put a logical one into a sentence.

Hunk took a breath. "You've been through a lot lately. We want to make sure you're okay."
Keith stared at him for a long time. Hunk's body language was completely open and kind, he had a soft expression on his face and his eyes were friendly. Keith trusted that Hunk wouldn't make fun of him if he did open up a little.

"If I tell you something, will you promise not to tell the others."

Hunk nodded and moved across the room to pull up a chair, completely abandoning his cooking. He sat directly in front of Keith, ready to listen. "Of course. What's bothering you?"

Keith bit his lip. Gosh, what had he gotten himself into. He'd never really done this before, talked about his feelings with someone. It was destined to end up awkward.

Keith decided to make a mental list of what he wanted to say in his head before speaking.

"I want to get better so that we can form Voltron and stop waiting around but I just.. I don't know how to do that and I.." nope, that wasn't it. He tried again. "There's people dying out there, Hunk. Innocent people are dying everyday because we can't form Voltron, because I can't figure this stupid thing out." Keith's chest began to tighten and he sucked in a shaky breath to calm himself. He was not going to let himself get worked up over this.

Hunk's face had softened even more, if that was possible. He nodded slowly, working through this new knowledge.

Surprisingly, Keith didn't feel embarrassed to be sharing his worries with Hunk and was actually glad to say it out loud instead of mulling it over all the time.

"That's not why innocent people are dying, Keith." He replied gently. "People are dying because of Zarkon. You can't walk right now because of Zarkon. We can't form Voltron because of Zarkon. None of this is your fault. You're as much a victim of Zarkon as those innocent people you talk about. We all are." Keith stared at him for a long time as Hunk continued. He stared Keith in the eyes sincerely. "Okay, Voltron's not the only thing that can help those people, and right now we can't do much, but that is not your fault. None of the Paladins think that, Allura and Coran, no one is going to blame you for any of this, because it's not your fault."

Keith listened carefully to every syllable. Hunk's words made sense in theory and they did seem to put things in perspective for Keith. It was true that all of this was happening because of Zarkon and his ridiculous desire to rule the entire universe, but Keith still felt a little guilty.

They waited in silence as this perspective processed within Keith. Hunk was patient and waited quietly for a response from Keith. "Okay, I'll think about it." He replied.

Hunk didn't seem to be finished giving advice yet because he kept working through the problem. "Why do you want to get better, Keith?"

Keith thought about his question. He thought he'd made his answer pretty clear already. "So we can form Voltron again?"

"If we weren't in this situation, and you didn't have the responsibility of Voltron, would you still want to work on walking again?"

Keith nodded. He knew what Hunk was getting at now and it was exactly what he needed to hear. "Of course."

"Okay. So instead of putting pressure on yourself to recover because of Voltron, maybe you should be thinking about the benefits for yourself. Forget all about these responsibilities you're putting on
yourself and think about why YOU want this to work."

Keith thought about Hunk's words again. He had a point. If Keith didn't feel so guilty about letting down the team, this whole process would be a lot easier on him. Not thinking about what he wanted was what was making him so irritated. Somewhere in the last couple of weeks he'd stopped thinking about himself and focused on how his condition was effecting everyone else.

It sounded kind of selfish to only think about himself but Keith realised that it was necessary. He wasn't going to get better if he was only doing it for everyone else.

Keith smiled softly, glad that Hunk was there to help figure things out for him. He still didn't know how to fix the problem but at least now he could stop focusing on the negatives.

"Thanks Hunk." Keith said sincerely. Hunk seemed satisfied with that.

He picked up the tray of cookies that had been cooling for the past few minutes. "Have a cookie, Keith."

It was such a kind gesture that Keith couldn't help but laugh. He took a cookie.

—

The next night, when all the others had gone to bed, Keith also retired to his bedroom, but he didn't sleep right away. He stayed up for a while, moving through the exercises he'd been trying lately. They weren't really any different to the usual ones, they were just some he could do on his own.

He'd thought long and hard about what Hunk had told him that day. He decided that he was going to continue with the same routine, but he was going to do this for himself.

Eventually it payed off.

Keith had been trying for at least an hour. It was now around 11pm space time and he still refused to give up. He didn't try anything out of the usual but for some reason, tonight it just decided to click. He tried to move his foot, starting with something small, and for some reason or another it just worked. It was slight and slow but it moved.

Keith sat on his bed, staring, much like the last time. His jaw had dropped open slightly and his eyes were wide. He tried again, the movement was more natural this time. He could feel it. The muscles in his leg tensed and contracted and MOVED.

Keith furrowed his eyebrows, repeating the movement again and again until he was sure he hadn't imagined it. His foot moved up and down over and over again.

Keith felt a smile playing on his lips. His hands were shaking with excitement. He tried the other leg. Nothing happened at first but he was persistent. Eventually both legs were moving from the ankles downward.

"Holy..." Keith didn't bother finishing that thought. He manoeuvred himself into his wheelchair and quickly wheeled himself out the door.

When he reached Lance's door he pounded on it.
Seconds later, Lance was standing at the door with his bayard in his hand. He huffed out a sigh when he saw Keith. "Dude, you don't have to break my door down, jeez."

Okay so maybe Keith had knocked rather aggressively but he was excited. Keith wheeled himself into the room. "Lance, you might want to sit down for this."

Lance squinted at him but obediently sat down on his bed. He watched Keith skeptically. Keith could tell by looking at him that Lance hadn't been sleeping when Keith came knocking. What had he been doing?

Keith lifted his leg from the footrest on his wheel chair and lowered it to the ground.

He looked up at Lance to make sure he was watching. "What's with all the drama, just show me what you wanna show me." He could see by Lance's expression that he was becoming impatient.

Keith huffed and slowly moved his socked foot toward him, without any assistance. He did it a few times just for effect. Lance blinked at his legs and then at his face.

"Holy shit." His face was pale. "Oh my god. Keeeith!" Lance stood up and started pacing the room excitedly. He seemed even more excited than Keith was.

Keith grinned. So did Lance. The other boy stopped pacing and knelt by Keith's feet. He lifted one of them and kissed Keith's sock dramatically, which was gross and totally unnecessary but kind of funny.

He pointed at Keith's other leg. "Does this one work too?"

Keith nodded and Lance picked that one up and kissed it too.

"You're so weird." Keith commented.

"I don't care." Lance replied gleefully. "This is amazing! At this rate, we'll have you up and walking within a week."

"Uhh, Lance. Just because I can move my ankles doesn't mean I'll be able to walk."

Lance rolled his eyes. "Well, not yet. but, were making progress. This is good." He lifted Keith's leg and leaned it on his knee. "So, only from here down?" He asked, pointing to Keith's ankle.

"Yeah, so far."

Lance nodded, there was a pout on his lips, he seemed to be thinking something through. "Well, if you can move your ankles you should be able to move everything above them, technically speaking."

That did make sense and it seemed kind of weird that he could move his ankles, the part furthest away, before everything else. "That sounds logical."

"So we should be able to get the rest of your legs moving now." Lance replied casually. Keith's leg was still propped up on Lance's thigh.

Keith pulled his leg away. "What, right now?" He asked. "It's almost eleven thirty. Don't you want to sleep or something?"

"Right, sorry. I just got excited, that's all." Lance scratched the back of his neck which was a nervous habit of his that Keith had picked up on. Why was he nervous?
"So am I, but I'll leave you alone and we'll pick this up in the morning." He started wheeling himself toward the door.

Lance seemed hesitant but he didn't say anything other than "Good night, Keith."

Keith knew he wouldn't get any sleep that night. He was too excited and determined. He'd most likely go back to his room and work on getting the rest of his leg moving.

--

Lance hadn't slept properly since the incident all those weeks ago. He'd either stay up all night thinking about it or he sometimes got nightmares too.

The more he got to know Keith, the worse the nightmares got. On the other hand, if he was helping Keith he didn't blame himself as much for what happened. It was a vicious cycle. One he was trying desperately to break.

The logical part of him knew that this wasn't his fault but it also knew that someone had to take the blame for what happened.

Lance hadn't been sleeping when Keith arrived that night and he doubted he would get much sleep afterward. He'd thought about telling Keith that he wasn't tired, but Keith seemed like he didn't want to bother Lance, not that he'd bothered him in the first place.

The only reason Lance had let him leave was because he didn't want to bother Keith if he wanted to go. He'd help Keith at eleven thirty pm if that's what Keith wanted but it didn't seem like he wanted that.

As it turns out, neither of the pair were planning on getting any sleep that night. After a while of pondering, Lance got up and decided to go for a stroll around the castle. He didn't just want to sit there all night if he could avoid it.

As he entered the hallway outside his room, he noticed a feint glow coming from his right. Lance walked towards it and saw that the light was coming from beneath Keith's door.

He stopped in front of the door and put his hand to his chin. Keith was still up. Lance was still up. Keith had left Lance because he didn't want to be a nuisance.

Lance knocked on Keith's door. There was a pause before he heard a faint "yeah?" Coming from the other side.

The door opened and Lance saw that Keith was sitting on his bed with his legs stretched out in front of him. Keith tilted his head slightly to look at Lance. "You weren't planning on getting any sleep tonight were you?" He asked.

Lance shook his head. "Come on. I have an idea."

They ended up in the training room. As Lance stared at the bar just above his head, he realised that his idea had a few flaws.

"You want me to hang from that?" Keith asked, rudely amused by Lance's brilliant idea.
Lance turned on him. "It'll allow free movement. It's just like standing except you're not touching the ground." He shrugged, signalling that it was just a suggestion.

"How am I meant to get all the way up there?" Keith questioned.

"Jump." Lance replied without hesitation.

Keith glared at him.

"I'm kidding, I'll lift you, obviously." Lance shrugged again.

Keith huffed, unsatisfied with the idea but willing to try. "Okay, but don't you dare let me fall."

Keith stretched his arms out in front of him and then above his head, preparing himself. His shirt lifted slightly, revealing smooth pale skin. Keith still seemed to have quite a muscular torso from what Lance could see. He was pretty sure Keith had been working on his core and upper body strength more since the incident, now that he couldn't exercise on his legs he must have found another way to keep reasonably fit. It showed.

Lance flicked his eyes away when Keith caught him staring, his cheeks warming slightly.

"Let's get this over with." Keith said, finally.

Lance crouched in front of Keith, beckoning for him to move forward in his seat. Keith obliged.

Lance knew he couldn't lift Keith how he usually would, he wouldn't be able to reach the bar. So he moved forward until Keith's thighs were on either side of his hips and placed his arms underneath Keith's butt.

Keith's face burned visibly pink and Lance fought the urge to chuckle. He placed his hands on Lance's shoulders for support. Lance wasted no time lifting the other boy up. Keith wasn't as heavy when his weight was distributed onto Lance's hips as well as his arms. He still weighed enough for Lance to struggle though.

Their positioning left Keith's face very close to Lance's. Lance could even see the flecks of violet in Keith's otherwise grey eyes. They looked really nice up close like this. He could also see the dark circles underneath those eyes, suggesting obvious lack of sleep. He wondered if Keith noticed the same circles under Lance's own eyes.

Lance had always found himself unintentionally gawking at Keith, he was nice to look at, but seeing him close up like this was surreal. He could see little details of Keith's face that he'd never noticed before. Like his light complexion, or how soft his lips looked. Lance moved his eyes back up to meet Keith's. Why was he thinking about that? He needed to stop.

They were in the same kind of position as two lovers would be just before one of them pushed the other up against the wall. Lance felt like maybe he should do that, judging by the intense stare Keith was giving him. His eyes searched Lance's face slowly, the same way Lance's eyes had done only seconds earlier.

Lance felt intimidated under Keith's intense gaze, he wondered if Keith thought about the same kind of things he did. Probably not, Keith wouldn't be interested in that kind of stuff, especially if it had anything to do with Lance.

"What are you looking at, mullet?" Lance tried to keep his voice stable, which was difficult when you had a very attractive young man pressed against you but, he managed.
"Nothing.." Keith replied. He glanced upward, toward the bar and reached one hand up to grab it. Once his fingers were wrapped around the bar he let go of Lance with his other hand and reached for the other side of the bar.

Lance let go of his legs, now very aware of where his hands had been. Keith swung a little as he suspended himself by the metal bar. Lance didn't step back, in case Keith suddenly dropped.

Keith looked down at Lance with a triumphant smirk on his face. "Now what?"

"Try lifting your legs." Lance suggested. He knew Keith wouldn't just magically be able to lift his legs, he just wanted to know what he'd be working with.

Sure enough, Keith's legs barely moved. He sighed, unimpressed, and lifted his eyes to look at Lance. They were almost at the same height. Keith's head just slightly above Lance's. He waited for a further explanation from Lance.

"Okay." Lance said. He crouched in front of Keith and grabbed him gently by the ankles. "When I lift your legs, you're going to use those muscles of yours to mimic the movement. Make sense?"

Keith nodded.

It was just an idea. Lance thought it might be easier for him to move his legs if he didn't have things like the ground or the fact that he was sitting to get in his way. If he was hanging straight he'd only have to compete with gravity.

Lance pulled Keith's legs up and toward him, forcing them to bend at the hip. He repeated the movement several times before he began to withdraw from assisting Keith. When he did finally let go, Keith's legs didn't stop. The movements were slight and slow as ever but he was definitely moving.

"Is this actually working?" Keith asked in disbelief. Lance looked up at him. Keith's face seemed strained with effort but Lance felt like it was more so from moving his legs that from holding onto the bar.

"I think it might be." Lance replied. He grabbed Keith's ankles again and lifted them higher this time.

By the time they decided to call it quits. Keith's legs were moving considerably more. It's seemed to get easier with time, like once he got the initial movement working, he could just build on it. They were nowhere near the level they needed to be at before Keith could try walking but they were getting there. Either way, Lance was satisfied with the progress and Keith seemed to feel the same way.

Lance helped him down and placed him back in his wheelchair. By then it was already two am.

"No offence but I am not getting up at six O'clock tomorrow."

Keith shook his head. "Don't worry, I was just thinking the exact same thing."

When Lance got back to his room he threw himself onto his bed and didn't even bother waking up for breakfast.
I can't believe people are still reading this fic lol. It's hit 150 kudos and nearly 2000 hits. I'm so thankful to everyone who is supporting this fic and can't believe it's nearly completed. Wow!

Thanks guys :)
Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

Hey, sorry about the slow update, I had to rewrite this chapter at least three times because I just wasn't happy with it. There's a bit of angst in this chapter and it must have gotten me triggered lol. Anyway, enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Two more weeks had passed and Keith still couldn't walk, not for a lack of trying. He'd been working relentlessly. Practicing, working on his balance, his coordination, his strength. Anything that could possibly help.

The only reason he hadn't given up yet was because of Lance. He didn't want to admit it to himself, but Lance had become his rock, and he needed him.

Lance had been by his side throughout this whole ordeal, never wavering, never giving up and Keith was so very grateful that Lance was there because Keith was struggling, especially now.

Several war ships had been trailing them for the past week. They hadn't attacked yet but the team knew they would eventually. In any other situation Voltron could have taken them out and the threat would be gone, but they didn't have Voltron, instead they were left with four lions and a castle. They weren't equipped to take on the fleet, not yet.

They all believed that Zarkon knew about the missing red lion. Voltron hadn't been seen in over a month and neither had the red lion. He must have known there was something wrong and decided to seize the opportunity.

The fleet's presence was wearing heavily on the entire team. They were all nervous and they were all restless. Allura had performed so many wormhole jumps in an attempt to shake the ships off their tail but they kept finding them eventually. They all knew that they were running out of options.

Keith knew that he was one of the only options left. If he became strong enough to pilot his lion, they could get rid of the ships and move on.

He could stand, with assistance and he could move his legs every which way but he couldn't walk. He couldn't apply much pressure with his legs either so piloting his lion was still off the table. Even though he tried for hours and hours each day he just couldn't do it.

One day he'd been so driven that Lance had to physically drag him from the training deck to get him to stop, only for him to go back an hour later and try again.

The pressure was building again and he was becoming impatient. It didn't take long for him to break.

--

They were on the training deck. They'd been there for hours. Keith was standing between two rails that Hunk had design for him. His weight was pressed heavily down on the handrails sitting at hip height.
Lance was with him, helping him, offering advice but it was in vain. Once again, nothing seemed to work.

"Come on, Keith. This is simple! Just one foot in front of the other." Lance demonstrated by strutting forward dramatically, showing off in front of Keith.

Keith audibly groaned. He really wasn't in the best mood today. "You know that's not funny, Lance." He complained.

Lance rolled his eyes. "Well, what do you expect from me. We've been in here for hours, and no offence, but I'm actually getting kind of bored."

"Then just go, I don't need you watching over me like a toddler." He didn't mean to put so much bite into his words.

Lance flinched slightly.

"I'm sorry." Keith sighed, shaking his head. He dropped down onto his knees, giving up on his previous activity, it hadn't been helping anyway. "That's not what I meant..

"If you want me to go, I will. I understand." Lance replied genuinely. He acted as though he were in the wrong instead of Keith. That's wasn't at all what Keith wanted.

"No. I don't want you to go. I'm just.." He closed his eyes, pinching the bridge of his nose. There was definitely a headache coming. He could tell from the persistent throbbing in his temples that it was going to be a bad one.

"Stressed?" Lance approached him. "Tell me about it! You should have seen Pidge this morning. I saw her chugging coffee straight from the pot." Just like that Lance switched from guarded to calm. How did he do that?

Keith offered him a raised eyebrow. "Seriously?"

Lance nodded his head. His eyes were wide and his mouth clamped shut. "Pretty sure she would've drank the whole thing if I hadn't snatched it off her."

Keith huffed out a short laugh. "Well, how come you don't seem stressed?" He said curiously.

"There's enough anxiety on this ship already, you don't need me angsting it up too."

Keith got the feeling that Lance's comment was pointed directly at him. Like he was the one angsting it up in the first place. Was he really that obvious?

"Why are you looking at me like I'm the one acting weird?"

Lance's sigh was exasperated. He sat down and folded his legs under him. Keith watched him in anticipation.

"You tell me."

Keith face palmed. Why was Lance being vague all of a sudden? It was like he knew Keith was annoyed and he couldn't help but poke at him.

Keith didn't say anything. He just quirked a disapproving eyebrow, clearly indicating that he was unimpressed with Lance's thumb twiddling. If he was going to accuse Keith of anything he'd have to be clear about what his accusations were.
"Seeing as you're going to make this hard, we might as well yank the cat out of the bag before it starts yowling." Lance readjusted his position and clamped his hands together. "You're getting obsessive-"

"I am not!" Keith said, outraged.

Lance lifted his palm toward Keith, shutting him up instantly. "Just hear me out."

Keith huffed but didn't speak.

"You're getting obsessive and you're going to overwork yourself and-"

"You're the one who told me to stop moping around in the first place!" Keith threw his hands in the air.

Lance huffed again. Why was he getting huffy? He was the one who'd insulted Keith! He had no right to be huffy.

"I know that and now I'm asking you to settle down a little." Why did he suddenly sound so much like Shiro? Keith was suspicious. Had Shiro put him up to this?

"Why?"

"Because you're spiralling. You're freaking out man."

"I'm not freaking out!" He was. He was totally freaking out.

Lance looked him straight in the eye, his expression warning. "I know what you're thinking but you need to stop."

Keith pointed somewhere behind him referring to the oncoming fleet of warships. "They've been following us for a week Lance! Every day the fleet gets bigger. Soon they're going to attack and we'll be defenceless."

"We won't be defenceless. Yes, we're down a lion but you holing yourself up in here isn't going to change that."

Keith glared at him. Lance sighed again "Look. I know you want to help the team but you're just making things worse on yourself."

"Well what do you suppose I do, Lance! I'm not going to sit here and watch when they attack. I can't do that." Keith was getting angry now. He could feel his temper flaring.

What did Lance expect him to do, go sit around, maybe watch a movie? He wasn't going to do that. He needed to keep pushing until his fucking legs decided to work.

He just wanted to help his team.

Lance spoke again, even more irritated than the last time. "I understand-"

"No you don't!" Keith shouted.

"Yes I do!" Lance bit back twice a hard.

Keith flinched. He'd never seen Lance this angry before, not even when their rivalry had been in full swing. Despite their constant arguing, Lance had never actually shouted at him.
"You feel like you can't do anything to help, like you're useless. I fucking get it, but you're the only one who thinks that."

Lance spoke with such conviction that Keith started to get the feeling that he did know exactly what that was like. Like he'd been through the whole routine a hundred times.

He stared at Lance, hunched over and closed off. Keith had never felt so small.

He wasn't sure if it was the stress, or the brutal honesty of Lance's words or just the shitty situation he'd been placed in but his breath started to shudder.

Oh no. No no no.

Without permission his eyes began to fill with tears. Great, now wasn't that just fantastic! He'd really lost the plot now.

Not willing to let Lance see him in such a state, he quickly covered his face, willing himself to stop but the tears just kept coming. His chest tightened as he pulled in a sharp breath. He needed to calm down.

He couldn't.

His shoulders were already shaking and his chest burned. This was going to happen. He was going to break down right in front of his teammate and there was nothing he could do to stop it.

Turns out Lance was right. He was absolutely freaking out.

Lance's gentle hand on Keith's shoulder made him curl even further in on himself. He did not want Lance to see this. He was embarrassed and angry and upset...

He accepted it for what it was. He was scared.

"Keith?"

Keith pulled away from him.

"Keith. Calm down." He placed his other hand on Keith's shoulder, holding onto him so he couldn't get away. Keith refused to look at him.

"Keith." Lance's voice was sincere and calm. All of his previous anger seemed to have vanished.

Keith's body betrayed him. He dropped his hands into his lap and slowly lifted his eyes to look at Lance. He could barely see him through the blurry tears. He blinked them away.

Lance was kneeling in front of him. His eyes widened slightly as they took him in. He looked genuinely shocked.

Keith was beyond embarrassed.

He dropped his gaze, not willing to stare at Lance any longer. The tears still streamed down his face and Keith started to bite at his bottom lip to distract himself. His shoulders were shaking uncontrollably. He sucked in short sharp breaths, clenched his fists.

"Hey. No, it's okay." Lance said softly. He reached out and gently placed his hand under Keith's chin, lifting his head to look at him again. Keith let him, unwilling to fight. Lance's eyes watched Keith intently.
He bit his lip harder, squirming out of Lance's grip. He must have had the most pitiful look on his face because Lance's lips dropped into a sympathetic frown.

Then Keith felt himself being pulled forward. Lance wrapped his arms around Keith's shoulders and suddenly he was being enveloped in a tight hug.

Keith's body went rigid at the unfamiliar contact. Lance was hugging him. Lance was hugging him and he wasn't letting go.

Lance's arms felt warm and safe, wrapped around him. Keith relaxed into the hug and his own hands reached around to grip onto the back of Lance's jacket. All of a sudden, he started sobbing.

Something about hugs was that they were so incredibly loving, and if someone hugged you when you were crying, you'd almost always end up sobbing into their shoulder, and that's exactly what Keith was doing now.

He knew he'd be embarrassed about it later but for now he couldn't help it. His whole body shook with each sob and his breath shuddered.

Lance didn't say anything for a long time. He just held onto Keith and let him cry it out, not even complaining when Keith's tears soaked the collar of his jacket. He ran his hand through Keith's hair, comforting him as he let it all out.

The stress, anger, anguish, fear, all of them came with a long pitiful sob.

Keith hadn't let himself cry in so long that he actually thought he'd forgotten how to. Obviously he hadn't. All of his pent up rage and sadness flowed out of him like a goddamn waterfall. He didn't even know he had so much water in him to create all those tears. It was like he'd metamorphosised into a puddle of water and self pity.

Eventually he calmed down. His face was still wet with tears but he wasn't sobbing anymore. He slowly pulled away from Lance so that he could look at him.

Lance smiled softly and reached his hands up to wipe the tears from Keith's face affectionately. The pad of his thumb carefully wiping his cheeks. "God you're a mess."

"I know."

He felt Lance's head bump against his own and a quiet laugh bubbled from his chest.

Man this whole situation was so messed up.

--

Lance had felt bad about screaming at Keith. He'd just gotten so angry. He'd wanted Keith to know that he cared about him, that he didn't want to watch him crumble but Keith wasn't listening so he'd snapped and it worked. Keith stopped arguing and started paying attention.

He'd been glad that Keith had cried, for once in his life just shown some kind of emotion other than anger or irritation, let it out and moved on.

Now that he'd seen it once, he never wanted to have to witness it again. Keith's tears had pulled so ferociously at Lance's heart that it physically hurt. Seeing Keith in such a vulnerable state had made
him angry at anyone who'd ever wronged the boy, including himself.

Afterwards they'd waited for any signs that Keith had been crying to dissipate before heading toward the dining hall for lunch. Lance had told him that there was nothing to be ashamed of but he respected Keith's desire to keep it a secret. He wouldn't tell another living soul that Keith Kogane had cried in his arms, not if Keith didn't want him to.

After lunch, Lance had followed Keith out of the dining hall. He insisted on spending some quality downtime with Keith. Keith suggested they play a board game, Lance thought this was a great idea and went to find one. He was glad that he had suggested anything other than the training deck.

He wanted Keith to be back on his feet as soon as possible but the whole team had noticed how much stress Keith was placing on himself. He needed something else to do, other than that.

Keith had a tendency to become fixated on tasks, and though it made him extremely efficient and task oriented, it was also detrimental a lot of the time. He'd get so focused on a task that he'd forget about himself and even his teammates, sometimes during a mission.

Lance had recognised the signs and decided that he wouldn't let it happen again, not under his watch.

So, he followed Keith to his room where they chatted and screwed around and played a dumb board game that they'd found in one of the cupboards and they didn't even think about the fleet of ships that were tracking them, or the fact that they were totally screwed if said ships decided to attack.

Lance had really grown to enjoy Keith's company lately. They hadn't done anything fun for the past week and it was cool to just chill for a bit, not thinking about their duties or the fate of the universe. Just two teenage boys doing normal teenage boy stuff.

Bickering with Keith was quite possibly one of Lance's favourite activities. He was smart and quick witted, kept Lance on his toes. Even when Lance lost, it was fun.

"Okay. Here's one. Would you rather kiss Black Widow or Scarlet Witch?" Lance stared up at the ceiling. They were on opposite corners of Keith's bed, Lance's legs were thrown over the top of Keith's, his socked feet hanging off the edge of the bed.

"Like, on the mouth?"

"No, on the ass." Lance teased. "Of course the mouth, idiot."

Lance heard a huff of laughter before Keith paused for a while, mulling it over. "Probably Black Widow."

"Same."

"She'd definitely punch you in the throat afterwards though."

Lance grinned. "It'd be worth the pain."

The mattress bounced along with their laughter. Keith started talking again and they settled down. "What about.. Princess Leia, or Rey."

"Hmm." Lance really had to think about that one. He commended Keith for his choices. "It's gonna have to be Rey even though she'd probably whack me with her stick."

"That's true."
"Damn. These fictional girls are deadly." Lance thought carefully about his next one. No more fictional girls. "Okay. Demi Lovato or Selena Gomez."

"You don't wanna add any guys in?" Keith asked so casually that Lance overlooked his hidden message.

"What's wrong with Selena and Demi."

"Nothing. I just don't really swing that way."

Lance sat bolt upright. Did Keith really just say that? Was he..? "Are you actually.."

"Gay?" Keith seemed bashful, almost sheepish. He was still laying on his back, dark bangs pushed aside. "Very."

Lance swallowed hard. It's not everyday you get your mind blown.

"But you said Black Widow."

"Well, yeah. No one in their right mind would say no to that experience."

Lance just gaped. What the hell? Keith was gay?! That means Lance actually had a chance. Not really, Keith was waaay out of his league, but.. wow.

He'd been so busy convincing himself that Keith wasn't. Trying not to get his hopes up. What a waste time that was.

"You're making this weird." Keith frowned.

Lance stopped his gawking and shook his head. "No. It's just.. Apparently the whole 'takes one to know one thing is now unreliable.'"

Keith rolled his eyes dramatically. "Shut up, Lance. I know for a fact that you're straight. You're the most girl crazy guy I've ever met!"

Lance grinned devilishly. This was gonna blow Keith's mind. "Ever heard of bisexuality, Keith?"

Now it was Keith's turn to sit up. He eyed Lance skeptically. "You're not.." his voice was filled with disbelief.

Lance nodded smugly. Keith should have seen the look on his own face. Priceless. Keith's mouth upturned into a happy smirk before he quickly smothered it. Lance didn't ponder too long on what that look could mean.

Now that they'd gotten that out of the way, Lance didn't feel so awkward about like ninety percent of the weird shit he'd said or done in front of Keith.

"In that case." He slumped back down onto the bed. His head landed on the pillow right next to Keith's. "Zac Efron or-"

"No point finishing that. The answer is always gonna be Zac Efron." Keith turned to face him. Their noses were barely an inch apart.

Now that he knew this new information about Keith, he'd be watching him carefully. Keith seemed to know and wasn't willing to give anything more away. It was like a game.
Both boys waiting for the other to make a move.

Okay... Lance was happy to play along.

"Wait, cute-teenage-high school musical Efron or older-sexy-neighbors kind of Efron?" Lance knew which one he'd rather. He was a sucker for hot, muscle-y Efron.

"Doesn't matter. I'll take both." Keith grinned.

"No but if you had to choose."

Keith furrowed his eyebrows. He really had to think about this one? "High school musical Efron."

"Really?" Lance gasped. That was very gay in Lance's opinion.

Keith shrugged. "Troy Bolton was my first crush."

"Aww man!" Lance chuckled. "I can't believe I thought you were straight five minutes ago."

"There's a lot of things you don't know about me, Lance."

What a cheeky bastard. Keith was being very passive today. Lance knew he was messing with him, it was all just part of his game, but what did it mean?

"You wanna know who my first gay crush was?" Lance smirked, he propped his head up on one arm, forcing Keith to look up at him.

He was glad that he could talk about this kind of stuff with someone now. Of course he'd told Hunk all about his sexuality but they didn't discuss it much, Lance didn't want to make Hunk uncomfortable so he didn't bring it up.

"Of course." Keith replied as he flipped over to stare at the ceiling. Lance remembered two weeks before when Keith had his thigh's pressed against Lance's hips and Lance had looked at him and seen how beautiful he was. He got that same feeling now as he stared down at Keith, the swirling in his stomach was actually justified now. He kind of wanted to kiss him.

Lance withheld on the basis that refrained feelings were better than unreciprocated ones. Better for the team, better for Keith, better for Lance.

Keith had told Lance about his sexuality but he hadn't hinted at any feelings for Lance. Lance wanted to make sure he didn't destroy their friendship or the cohesion of the team by doing something dumb.

For now he would wait it out.

"Ryan Reynolds." Lance finally replied. "Took his shirt off in the proposal and suddenly it hit me just how gay I was."

Keith chuckled, his eyes landing on Lance. "How old were you?" He asked, still laughing.

"About ten. Mum and my sister were watching it and of course I walked in during that one scene."

"The one where they're both.. naked?"

"Yes, the scene where they're- Hey. Don't look at me like that! I was ten!"
Keith had a look of mock disgust on his face. "That just makes it so much worse." Keith chuckled into his hand. "After that did you sit there and watch the rest of the movie?"

Lance laid back down. "Of course I did. I'm no idiot." Who in their right wouldn't sit and watch the rest of a Ryan Reynolds movie? The guy was a literal god.

Keith scoffed and pulled a teasing face at him. "You should let other people tell you that."

Lance rolled his eyes. "You're so mean."

Keith just huffed in reply. Lance noticed a smirk on his lips.

They both laid there for a while, not saying anything, just breathing. It was actually kind of nice. Lance stuffed that thought right back into his brain, never to be analysed again.

Why was it that with any other girl, Lance could flirt and be confident and make it entirely obvious how he felt, but with Keith he just kept running into dead ends. He just got awkward and nervous and he couldn't be forward with how he felt because he'd just turn into a big babbling mess.

He'd tried to throw hints but he was always extremely subtle about it at first because, what if Keith was straight, what if he wasn't interested?

Now that he knew that Keith was in fact, not straight, he thought it would be easier but it wasn't.

"What time is it?"

"Why, did I hurt your feelings?" Keith said teasingly.

"No. I'm asking because unless you want this to turn into a sleepover, then I should probably go back to my room."

"A sleepover. What, like you stay here for the night?"

Lance opened his mouth to tease Keith because duh, what else would he mean by sleepover? but he stopped himself because Keith had this look on his face, like he was contemplating saying something but he wasn't sure whether he should.

"Why? Do you want to have a sleepover?" Lance prodded.

Keith's eyes widened and he turned away, suddenly embarrassed. "Psssh, no. That would be weird."

"Not really. I mean.. you stay on one side of the bed, I'll stay on the other. Nothing weird about it at all."

If Keith seemed fazed by Lance's suggestion then Lance would just blame it on exhaustion or something like that. He wouldn't tell Keith that a small part of him was actually excited by the idea of sharing a bed with him. He wouldn't even tell himself that.

Keith turned and stared at him for a while. Lance wasn't sure exactly what he was looking for but eventually Keith shrugged. "If you want to do that then I don't mind. No funny business though, otherwise I'll kick you out."

Lance placed a hand on his chest, swearing by oath. "No funny business. I promise."

"Fine." Keith said, climbing out of the bed. He expertly climbed into his wheelchair and wheeled his way across the room to a cupboard. Lance sat up and watched as Keith opened the cupboard door
and reached in. He pulled out a spare pillow and flung it at Lance's head. Lance wasn't quick enough to react and it hit him in the face with a soft thud.

Satisfied with himself, Keith wheeled his way back over to the bed and climbed under the covers. Lance shoved the pillow under his head and sighed.

"You're not going to stab me in my sleep are you?"

Keith rolled over so that Lance couldn't see his expression. "Depends. Are you going to give me a reason to?"

"No."

"Then maybe I'll spare you."

Chapter End Notes

This chapter is such a mess, honestly. Anyway, you may have noticed that I changed the estimated amount of chapters. I wanted to add an epilogue at the end so that's why.

Let me know what you think about this chapter and feel free to leave some constructive criticism because I had no idea what I was writing throughout the entirety of this chapter.

As always, thank you so much for leave all the kudos and comments, you're awesome!
Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

Okay so this chapter was actually really easy to write for some reason but I haven't edited it yet so there's going to be about a hundred mistakes but meh.
As usual, enjoy :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Lance woke to a loud persistent knocking and Coran's voice calling through the door.
"Keith. Open up!"

Keith? They'd known each other for months now and Coran didn't even know his name? Rude.

He pretended to ignore Coran. He was warm and comfy in his bed and he didn't want anyone to disturb that.

Lance heard an irritated grumble from the other side of the bed and his eyes snapped open. Keith spun around so quick that it almost gave Lance whiplash. He was staring back at him with wide eyes. Both of their faces a mask of horror as they processed the situation and that horror intensified when they realised what this meant for them.

Keith's mouth moved to whisper a singular word. Shit.

Yes, shit. This whole 'sleepover' thing didn't mean anything. They'd just chatted and gone to sleep there was nothing weird going on here, but if Coran walked in and saw them in a bed together.. oh no and then he'd probably go tell Allura and then everyone would know and they'd question it and god knows Pidge would make some kind of ridiculous comment about how he was boinking Keith and then they would be shamed for life.

They just stared at each other in shock for a few more seconds.

Another round of knocking set Keith into action. He shoved Lance back against the wall and threw the covers over him, hiding him. He then pushed himself backward and leaned his back against Lance, shielding him from view.

Nope. This wasn't going to work.

"Come in." Keith's voice sounded strangled.

Lance pressed himself flat against the mattress and tried to quieten his breathing. His heart was beating irregularly fast.

There was a swishing sound that Lance recognised as the door opening and then there were footsteps. Keith's body went rigid pressed against his and Lance held his breath.

"Good morning. There's a team meeting in five minutes so I better see you there." Coran said, not unkindly.
"Yeah sure. I'll be there in a minute." Keith replied, his body relaxed slightly. Lance hoped that was the end of their conversation, he was running out of air already.

"Good lad." Coran said, chipper as ever. Lance thought that was it but it wasn't, Coran kept talking. "You haven't seen Lance around have you? He wasn't in his room."

Keith noticeably stiffened and Lance prayed that Coran didn't notice. Lance felt Keith's body push further backwards, now crushing him against the wall. Did he not know that Lance was already suffocating down here?

"Uhh. No I- umm I haven't seen him since yesterday. Why would I know where he- he's not here." Nervous laughter.

Oh they were definitely screwed if Keith didn't shut his mouth. He might as well have just told Coran exactly where Lance was.

There was a long, suspicious silence that had Lance silently praying to whoever would listen. Please don't let anyone find out. Wait... find out about what exactly? They hadn't even done anything.

"Okay.." Coran replied. He had a very suspicious tone. "If you do see him, make sure to let him know about the meeting, would you."

"Yeah- yep, no worries- I can do that." Keith sounded so nervous that Lance wanted to punch him. The door swished open and shut and Lance finally peek his head out and took a long, well deserved breath of air.

Keith was blushing like an idiot. Lance just stayed there for a moment, catching his breath.

"You're a terrible liar." He said, shaking his head with relief. Keith's hair was fluffy and a bit of a mess after sleeping on it. Lance would have made a comment about it being cute if it weren't for their awkward situation.


Lance didn't have to be told twice. He grabbed his own pillow and scampered out of the room without saying a word.

--

Keith sat on his bed for about thirty seconds, trying to process what on earth had happened in the last twenty four hours. More so the last twelve hours.

Lance had slept in his bed, with him, immediately after Keith had told him he was gay. Lance had also gone on to tell Keith that he was bisexual which had honestly blown Keith's mind to pieces because Lance was capable of liking boys which was amazing because Keith was a boy and he liked Lance. He really liked Lance. He really really liked Lance. Did Lance like him back?

Lance had put so much effort into hanging out with Keith lately and helping him and last night they'd shared a bed. Honestly, Keith had only suggested it because he was curious. He didn't actually
expect Lance to agree. When he did agree it left Keith even more confused about their friendship than before.

So where did that leave them exactly?

Keith looked up at his wall clock and swore under his breath. The meeting was supposed to start in one minute and Keith would be shamed by both Allura and Shiro if he was late. He'd have to think about all this Lance stuff later.

Keith quickly changed into a clean shirt and made his way to the designated meeting room.

When he entered he noticed that Lance wasn't there yet. He hoped that didn't seem conspicuous to everyone. Was it weird that Lance wasn't there yet? What was he doing?

Sure enough, as Keith was still mulling things over, Lance entered the room and made his way over to stand next to Keith. They didn't look at each other.

"Oh, Lance. Where were you this morning? I looked for you everywhere." Coran asked curiously.

Keith turned toward him, trying not to look guilty. What was he thinking? He wasn't guilty of anything, but for some reason Keith felt he'd been caught with his hand well and truly lodged in the cookie jar.

Lance swallowed, from where Keith sat he could see the light blush seep onto the bridge of Lance's nose. "I was... in the kitchen."

"Aha, with Hunk?" Coran asked. He was suspiciously eyeing Lance.

"Yeah... I just walked in when Hunk was leaving, didn't I Hunk?" Hunk gave him an odd look and Lance's eyes pleaded for him to agree. What was the point of dragging Hunk into this? Now Hunk would be suspicious too.

And Lance called Keith a crappy liar. At least he hadn't given anyone else the right to be suspicious, unlike Lance.

Hunk nodded rapidly, complying to Lance's prayers. He was truly a great friend. Keith decide that he would find a way to thank him for his courtesy later. "Yeah, totally. I caught him on the way out and let him know about the meeting."

"Then I went to my room to grab my jacket before I came here." What an odd piece of information to add on.

Keith let out a silent, relieved sigh when Coran decided to drop it. He looked up at Lance who was donning his usual smirk.

"I'm glad we got that sorted." Allura said in a tone that almost sounded like sarcasm. Keith didn't ponder it too long because Allura was moving on. "As I'm sure you've all noticed, we have an army following us." She motioned toward the large glass wall of the ship and Keith took a look. He could just see a few tiny, distant ships amongst the stars. "They're growing in size everyday and I fear that if we do not take action now, it may be too late."

The tension in the room seemed to escalate through the roof at her eerie words. They were going to attack the army then? A few days ago they'd decide that attacking was a suicide mission.

"Are you sure that's the only option?" Lance asked. "I mean, we've only got four operational lions and that's a lot of warships." He was staring out the window into space but slowly turned his
attention back to Allura, waiting for her reply.

Instead, Shiro spoke for her. "That's our best option right now, but only if you all agree. Just know that the longer we wait, the bigger their army becomes. Eventually they're going to attack."

Keith sighed. Once again swallowed with guilt. He wished he could help in some way.

"I say it's about time we get them off our tail." Pidge offered. She sounded determined and fearless. Keith couldn't believe she was only fourteen.

"Agreed. Those ships have been freaking me out for days. I want them gone." Hunk answered anxiously.

Lance nodded. "I'm with Hunk. The stalker ships need to go ASAP."

So it was settled. They would take on the fleet with only four lions and a castle. Keith couldn't say he was surprised. They'd beaten plenty of insane odds in the past but he definitely had a bad feeling about this one.

"Keith?" Shiro prodded. When Keith only replied with a confused expression Shiro continued. "You're a part of the team, what do you think?"

Keith felt weird about being singled out but was pleasantly surprised that he was being included in the decision. He crushed that feeling down as soon as it surfaced. "I guess it's the only option so.. you might as well try." He'd almost said we, forgetting momentarily that he wasn't a part of this mission. It ached, not being able to do anything but he'd learned to put up with it.

Soon. He told himself. You'll be able to help them soon.

They were all anxious about the upcoming battle, yet not anxious enough to skip out on breakfast. They'd need their energy.

They talked strategy as they ate and Allura updated them on her findings. From what she could tell there were at least fifteen big warships surrounding them, each with their own army of drone fighters. This information did not serve to ease anyone's nerves.

Keith went back to the control room as the paladins made their way to the hangar. From here he had a clear view of the battlefield ahead of them.

Allura stood at her usual place. Palms pressed against the two controls where she could fly the castle.

One by one the lions exited the hangar and appeared in front of the castle. Once they were all ready Allura raised the particle barrier and turned on the castle communications. "Remember what we planned. The castle can provide support if necessary."

"Thanks princess." Shiro replied over the comms, then went on to address the paladins. "Listen up team. You all know the deal, work as a team, take out the enemy. We've done this a hundred times."

"Is anyone else nervous?" Hunk asked. "I'm just really nervous right now."

"Don't go getting your panties in a twist, Hunk. Like Shiro said, we've done this a hundred times, no big deal." Lance had his usual cocky demeanour activated. The one he conjured whenever he was nervous but didn't want anyone to know. He was faking confidence but it was something Keith had come to find familiar during situations like these.
Lance was good at lightening the mood and he knew that despite their protests at his dumb jokes and ridiculous analogies, the whole team appreciated Lance's effort. Keith couldn't help but find it very mature of him.

"Everyone know the plan?" Shiro asked, his voice soft but stern, confident.

The others all replied with variations of agreement and the lions started moving.

It only took about three minutes before everything went to shit. Keith watched the whole thing as it went down in front of him. Each lion had already taken multiple hits and they seemed to be losing momentum. They'd barely taken out the first ship when the others started to attack.

That's when Keith heard it. A lion's roar. Not just any lion.. That was red. He recognised her aura reaching out to him. She was calling to him.

Allura turned to look at Keith. Her face was tense and she winced when she saw Keith's face because he was actually considering going to red. His legs were stronger than before, he could apply some sort of pressure, maybe he could use the pedals. Maybe he could fly his lion. Maybe he could help.

Allura shook her head. "No. Keith, you're not ready." She called back to him. Keith heard his lion call to him again, louder this time.

He wasn't strong yet but he might be able to do this. Red obviously thought he could. There was a shout through the comms as Shiro took yet another hit to the black lion.

"I'm going." Keith said. Allura shook her head again. She couldn't move away from the controls without deactivating the particle barrier. She couldn't stop him.

"Keith. Stop. It's not safe!" Allura shouted as Keith began leaving the room. She turned to Coran furiously. "Coran.." she pleaded.

He looked uncomfortable but spoke with conviction. "The lions know best, Allura. She's calling for her paladin." He said.

Keith felt his heart leap. He exited the room and moved down to the hangar. He was going to fly his lion.

Coran walked in just as Keith was attaching the chest plate of his paladin armour. Despite his eagerness, Keith wasn't stupid enough to hop in his lion without armour.

"You're not here to dissuade me are you?" He asked, shoving on his helmet. Keith had already made his decision. If red was encouraging him then he would go, surely she knew what was best.

"Actually, I just came to tell you to be careful. You're not at full strength yet so the lion may be hard to control. Don't forget that." Coran's tone was caring but stern.

Keith nodded. He understood that Coran was just looking after him. They all were.

Red greeted him with a low purr and for the first time Keith was relieved that they hadn't found a new paladin for her. He'd visited her often in the last two month's, letting her know that he hadn't
abandoned her. She'd seemed very concerned about him lately but today she felt different. She encouraged and reassured him.

Keith grinned. He was beyond excited that she was willing to let him fly. In his previous visits she hadn't even allowed him the opportunity, but right now she was willing. The cockpit lit up as he sat in his seat and she moved the seat so that he could reach the controls.

Coran took his wheelchair away and the lion's jaw clamped shut before she let out a loud roar. Keith heard the others shouting over the comms through his helmet.

"What was that?" Pidge called before taking a hit. She grunted.

Keith turned off the communications and focused on what he was doing. He reached his legs out, testing the pedals. He pushed them down carefully and red started moving.

She took off as the hangar doors opened and suddenly they were in space and Keith was flying his lion again. Keith laughed with exhilaration and red roared again, happy to be flying for the first time in months.

As Keith tested out the pedals he realised that they weren't as easy for him to control as they usually were but red was helping him out. He couldn't push the pedal all the way to the ground but red readjusted her movements to fit the handicap. He silently thanked her before turning on the comms.

"You guys need some help?" He asked as he passed through the particle barrier.

"Keith?" Lance's face popped up on his control panel, his expression was a mixture of confusion and concern. "What are you doing? Are you crazy?"

Keith pushed onward, ignoring Lance's question because honestly, what was he supposed to say? 'I'm flying my lion and... no?'

"Keith's in his lion?" Hunk asked cautiously.

"Awesome!" That was Pidge. "Does that mean we can finally form Voltron and kick ass?"

"Pidge. Language." Shiro moved on to greet him. "Good to have you back-"

"Keith. Go back to the castle. We don't need you here." Lance's voice was panicked.

"Oh, really?" Keith could see the blue and yellow lions just ahead of him, fighting a group of drones. "You guys are getting your asses handed to you."

The blue lion finished taking out its next target before turning on him. "You can't even fly your lion properly. This is too dangerous. I'm telling you to go back to the castle."

"Who are you to tell me what I can and can't do?" Keith asked rhetorically. He tried not to feel insulted.

"Lance!" Hunk warned but Keith had already seen the threat. He crashed his lion into Lance, pushing him out of the way of a powerful laser. The beam passed just to the side of them and Keith urged his lion onwards.

"How about you stop worrying about what I'm doing and focus on piloting your own lion." He called. Keith directed red toward one of the larger ships, shooting the canons with his own laser.

"Excuse me." Lance called after him.
"Aaaaand they're back to fighting-"

Lance cut Pidge off before she could continue. "I was piloting my lion just fine before you came out here and distracted me!" He shot his ice blaster at the cannon that Keith had been working on and Hunk came hurtling through, body-slamming his lion into the cannon and breaking it right off.

"Oh. I'm sorry I'll just go back to the castle then. My bad, sorry for the interruption." Keith spat through the comms. Despite his attitude he was actually the happiest he'd been in weeks. He was flying his lion again, things were back to normal.

"How about we form Voltron and avoid being obliterated by these cannons?" Pidge asked but Keith didn't listen. Apparently neither did Lance.

"Finally!" Lance exclaimed. "You're listening to my advice."

"Sarcasm, Lance. I was being sarcastic."

"So was I!"

"Woah. You two are bickering like an old married couple.." That was Hunk.

Keith stopped bickering with Lance and a heavy blush settled over his face. Lance shut up as well.

"Good." Shiro cut in before they could start up again. "We need to form Voltron. Keith, do you think you can handle it."

"Of course I can."

"Nooo. He can't."

"Shut up, Lance." Keith huffed. His tone light and not at all harsh.

Surely Lance was about to say something else but Shiro cut him off. "Please don't start fighting again. You're breaking my heart."

--

"I think you owe me an apology." Keith raised his eyebrows at Lance as they exited the hangar together. The others were just behind them, chattering about something.

"What, exactly should I be apologising for?" Lance asked skeptically. He turned to look down at Keith.

"Doubting my abilities." Keith replied nonchalantly. It was no different to their normal bickering.

Eventually they'd managed to end Lance and Keith's bickering and as soon as Voltron was formed the ships began retreating. They took out the few who had decided to stay and fight before returning to the castle.

Now it was Lance's turn to raise an eyebrow. "I think what you're actually asking me to do is to apologise for worrying about you."

Keith tried to think of something to say but he honestly didn't know how to reply to that. Fortunately, Pidge interrupted before the silence became suspicious.
"Lance worrying about Keith? Never thought I'd hear those words in the same sentence."

"I don't think you'll have to worry about Keith, buddy. Two months ago he couldn't even move his legs and five minutes ago he was taking on bad guys in an alien space cat."

Keith blushed without meaning to.

"Oh, right. Paralysis and fighting aliens. Nothing to worry about." Lance was smug as he shoved into Hunk. Hunk was unaffected by Lance's attempts to throw him off balance.

Keith turned back to smile at them and he caught Shiro's eye. Shiro returned a soft smile and put a hand on Keith's shoulder, stopping him from continuing down the hall way. "You did well today." Shiro said, his expression proud. Keith felt like he was getting a pep talk from an older brother. "I'm glad you're doing better."

Pidge turned and punched Keith playfully in the shoulder. "That's a big fat ditto for me."

Hunk turned and smiled. "Yeah man, if you hadn't come out when you did we would've been toast."

Keith squirmed under their affection and his heart felt so big that he feared it would break out of his rib cage. His mouth formed into a small, shy smile and he looked away to hide it. He could let his team no that he appreciated their kind words, that would be absolutely ridiculous.

"Awww!" Lance chuckled. "He's embarrrrrassed."

"Shut up, Lance!" Keith shouted, his face felt incredibly warm and uncomfortable. He was going to die of embarrassment.

Chapter End Notes

I cannot believe how close I am to finishing this god damn fic. There's a scene in the next chapter that I've been waiting to write since chapter one and I'm so excited to just get it out. Also, I've never gotten past writing the fourth chapter of a fic so this is exciting.

On the other hand I've just entered my final year of high school and I'm currently being swarmed by homework and assignments so just bare with me. The next chapter might be a little late :(

Hope you enjoyed the chapter. Let me know what you think :)
Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

Hey, sorry for the late update. I'm apologising with an extra long chapter this time, please forgive me.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Lance noticed Hunk had been giving him a lot of questioning looks since that morning, the one where Lance had slept in Keith's bed and he'd made up some story to cover it up and then he'd dragged Hunk into the story and promised that he'd explain himself to Hunk later. Yeah, that morning.

So here he was, explaining himself to Hunk. Honestly, he thought about making up another cover story to make things easier but realised that Hunk already knew so much that it was pointless telling him anything but the truth.

"You wanna know why I was telling lies the other day, don't you?" Lance asked when Hunk approached him in the movie room. Lance had formerly been in there alone, looking for a movie to watch. Usually he would come here with Keith and they'd watch a movie together but Keith was off somewhere talking with Shiro about something. He hadn't told Lance what they had to talk about so he didn't ask.

"Well, yeah. You can't just drag me into covering your ass and then not tell me what I was covering for." Hunk plopped down on the floor next to Lance. Lance put down the large selection of weird Altean movies and stared up at his friend.

Lance rolled his bottom lip between his teeth as he decided whether or not to tell Hunk. He gave in. He couldn't lie to his bestie. "If you tell anyone about this I will honestly make your life a living hell." Lance stared him down.

Hunk grinned back mischievously. The glint in his eye told Lance that Hunk knew he was about to hear some juicy gossip. "I wouldn't have it any other way."

"Okay... I may or may not have shared a bed with Keith the night beforehand." Lance winced.

Hunk's jaw dropped wide open. Lance had told him all about his big gay crush on Keith back when they were at the garrison and ever since Hunk had been an advocate for their relationship. He would let Lance drawl on about how pretty Keith's eyes were or how talented he was or how nice his ass was. So Hunk wouldn't have been surprised that Lance had taken the opportunity to share a bed with Keith. His surprise came from somewhere else.

"Oh my god did you guys have sex?" He asked, voice filled with the same horror that showed on his face, because knowing that two of your friends were having sex in the room a few doors away from yours would most likely be horrifying to anyone. "Wait no don't answer that. I don't want to know."

Lance's face immediately morphed into the same look of horror that his best friend was offering him. Sex? With Keith? He couldn't even imagine it right now. Sure, he'd probably fantasise about it later on but that's not at all what he wanted. God, he was just trying to figure out whether Keith liked him
or not, he wasn't trying to have sex with him. Plus, Keith was basically still a paraplegic, could they even do that? Why was Lance even thinking about this in the first place.

"No! Jesus fuck. We didn't have sex! How could you even think that holy-" Lance's cheeks were overheating.

Hunk threw his hands in the air. His face had morphed from horror to relief to outrage. "You said you slept with him. That usually means sex too."

"Noooooooooo. No sex. He slept on one side of the bed and I slept on the other. No funny business at all." Lance's heart felt like it might actually explode out of his chest. The idea of having sex with Keith was making his brain think ridiculous thoughts.

"Then why would you need to hide that, if nothing happened?" Hunk asked skeptically. He didn't believe Lance at all.

Lance huffed in betrayal. His best friend didn't believe him, what had the world come to? "Because it's not a normal thing to do. Keith obviously didn't want anyone to know about it and neither did I."

"Okay. Good. No sex. I can actually look at you both without seeing that horrible image." Hunk sighed calming down. He seemed to believe Lance now. "So.. why did you sleep in Keith's bed? How on earth did that happen?"

It was Lance's turn to throw his hands in the air. He didn't even know himself how it had happened. "He kind of suggested it I guess, and then it happened."

Hunk furrowed his eyebrows tapping at his chin. He looked like he was trying to do some kind of calculations in his head. "Keith. Your rival, Keith. The guy who you say has absolutely no feelings for you, asked you to sleep in his bed.. with him?"

Lance's eyes widened and he nodded. When it was put that way..

"Interesting." Hunk said with a mischievous grin.

--

Lance watched Keith from where he sat by the table and smiled. Keith moved as though he was walking on ice, clutching onto any piece of furniture that could possibly help in keeping him upright. Lance thought it was absolutely hilarious and he always made sure to let Keith know this.

Keith had been walking for a few days now but he was still very wobbly. Now that he could walk he refused to even look at his wheelchair, saying that he'd rather spend the day wobbling around than being pushed around.

Lance commended him for his choices but couldn't help but laugh at Keith sometimes when he tried to walk. It was always good natured of course and if Keith showed any signs that he wanted Lance to stop teasing him, he would do so immediately.

Keith placed his and Lance's bowl's in the sink. Another thing, since he'd started walking, Lance had noticed that Keith would make any excuse to get up and walk somewhere. Whether it was offering to take everyone's dishes to the sink or walking the long way to get to wherever he wanted to go.

At first Lance had thought that Keith was just trying to show off or something which didn't really
make sense because everyone else on the ship could walk so it wasn't much to brag about but when he'd asked him about it, Keith had said-

"I couldn't walk before but I can now. So I do it as often as I can."

Which Lance found ridiculously endearing, much like everything else Keith did lately.

Speaking of which, Keith was now scrambling across the room, weight distributed mainly to his arms as they pushed against the counter top, keeping him upright. It kind of reminded Lance of a newborn animal testing its legs for the first time.

"You ever watch David Attenborough?" Lance asked, trying hard to keep the amusement from showing on his face.

Keith immediately realised he was about to be insulted and returned a wicked glare in reply.

Their interactions had come to resemble those of a cat and mouse lately, except both of them thought they were the cat and neither knew that they were each other's mouse. They were both completely oblivious to the others motives and accepted every action as platonic.

Both of them sought out ways to get the other to reveal any sign of something more but they were both amazing at hiding their feelings from each other. Lance still studied and overthought every single one of Keith's reactions, memorising them so that they could be analysed later.

Lance put on his best attempt at a David Attenborough impersonation. "Here we have a newborn giraffe trying out his legs for the first time." Lance spoke through a grin. Keith groaned because of course Lance was making fun of him. "He's still a little wobbly but he tries his best."

"Lance stop." Keith whined, he looked only partially annoyed so Lance continued.

"The newborn cries out for his mother but she refuses to help. The young, awkward giraffe must learn this new skill on his-"

Lance ducked away from the container that came flying at his head. He offered Keith a mocking look of betrayal.

Keith was already reaching for something else to pelt at his face. He threw his upper body across the countertop, reaching for another empty container.

Lance continued his commentary. "The newborn proves himself to be ferocious, this trait will be useful in his future."

Keith finally managed to scramble across the countertop and turned with an arsenal of containers.

"The newborn plans his attack. His prey is a beautiful, dashing, handsome young man by the name of Lance McClain."

Keith clutched his containers in one arm and watched Lance with a suppressed smile. He leaned heavily against the countertop.

Lance barely ducked out of the way when Keith hurled his first container. He immediately grabbed for a second one.

Lance ran across the room and hid behind one of the other counters giggling like an idiot. He could hear Keith laughing too.
"Lance is too fast and easily outruns the awkward giraffe. He waits patiently for the predator to give up." Lance called from behind the counter, his impression was a little off now due to the fact that every sentence came with a snicker.

"You dumbass." Keith called back. Lance could tell just by listening to his voice that Keith was closer now. "Giraffes aren't predators, they eat leaves and shit."

Lance poked his head over the countertop and immediately regretted it. Keith pegged a container at his face with the accuracy of a true marksman. He laughed at Lance's failed attempt to dodge.

"You asshole!" Lance yelled and pushed himself around the counter, running for Keith instead. Keith tried foolishly to throw more containers at Lance but he was too busy laughing to actually put effort into aiming.

Lance pounced on him and grabbed him around the waist before flipping him around and dragging him toward the door. He had his arms looped underneath Keith's under arms and the back of Keith's head rested against Lance's chest.

Keith dropped all his containers and started whining.

Lance didn't know where they were going, preferably somewhere Keith couldn't throw things at him.

"Nooooo." Keith howled in defeat as Lance dragged him out the door but he was still laughing hysterically.

Lance grinned. "The giraffe has been defeated and will now live out the rest of his life in shame, knowing that he was defeated by the beautiful Lance McClain."

"Let go of meeeeee." Keith huffed as he struggled against Lance's hold.

Lance continued to drag him down the hallway until they came across Shiro who gave them an odd look. Lance halted to give him a smug grin.

"What are you two doing?" Shiro asked in amusement and also confusion. He squinted at them.

"Taking out the trash."

"Shiro. Help me, please." Keith begged.

Shiro shook his head before continuing down the hall. "I'm never having kids." He muttered to himself.

Lance continued to drag Keith all the way to the movie room where he was sure Keith couldn't find any projectiles to attack Lance with.

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Keith had destroyed so many Galra fighters that he'd lost count. He flew in circles around the base, picking off anything Galra that came within twenty metres of his lion. Red was acting extra excited today, performing better as a pair than they had in weeks.

The mission was simple. Protect the native's and take out the Galra. No big deal right? Except the
Galra base on this planet was huge and heavily armed. The village, however, was reasonably small and very much defenceless.

Due to the fact that he hadn't really worked up to a high enough level of combat since the accident a few months ago, Keith was left on patrol. He didn't mind too much as long as he got to help in some way. His job was basically just to distract the drones while Lance and Pidge infiltrated the base, and Hunk and Shiro got the villagers to safety.

"You guys find anything yet?" He asked as he blew up another pair of ships. Red roared with excitement.

"We've literally been in here for less than a minute, Keith." Pidge whispered at him in a disapproving tone. "Be patient."

"Keith, make sure you keep those drones distracted. We're still trying to figure out where to hide the villagers." Shiro answered. He sounded stressed. "How are things looking up there?"

Keith shrugged and then realised that no one could see him. "Eh, not too bad. They haven't found the blue lion yet and Pidge's cloaking on the green lion still seems to be operational."

"Of course it is." Pidge replied. "I built it myself." Keith heard Lance scoff and Pidge let out a yelp. "Ow. Lance!" She grumbled. "Stop messing around."

Shiro's voice came through the comms again. "You two stop fighting. You need to focus on the mission."

Keith could almost hear Lance and Pidge roll their eyes simultaneously. Who's idea had it been to pair those two for a mission anyway?

A few moments later Pidge was talking again, her voice barely a whisper. "We're in. It shouldn't take too long to extract the information. Lance, help me look for somewhere to plug this in."

There was quiet scuffling for a moment but Keith drowned it out, focusing on his own task. The drones were starting to gang up on him now, he couldn't get distracted.

"What about this?" Lance's voice barely registered in Keith's ears.

"The big red button, seriously?"

Keith aimed for a group of drones and fired his lasers. They disappeared in a small explosion.

Lance was quick to reply. "Do you see any other options?"


Keith's eyes widened as he noticed the lights on the base flash red temporarily. Then a bleating alarm came through his helmet and the sound of Lance and Pidge arguing.

"Seriously? What did you guys do?" Keith growled.

"Pidge pressed the big red button and now the alarms are going off." Lance deadpanned.

Pidge's voice was panicked. "It was your idea!" She argued.

Lance ignored her. "Quick hide under here."
At that moment every single drone turned and hesitated before flying back in the direction of the hangar. They were going back to the base. Back to where Lance and Pidge were hiding.

"Uhh, guys. I think you should get out of there. Now." Keith commanded as he dove in to take out as many drones as he could before they entered the base.

"Why?" Lance asked. "What's going on?" He kept his voice low.

"The drones are heading back to the base. You're about to have a lot of company."

"It's too late. They're already here." There was another long silence as they all tried to figure out their next move. Lance and Pidge were trapped now, in a base full of Galra soldiers.

"Pidge... Where's your bayard?" Lance's voice was low and cautious.

Keith heard Pidge take in a sharp breath. "Damn. I left it on the console." There was the muffled sound of something moving and then- "Oh crap- Lance!" Pidge shouted.

"Pidge!" Lance called back and then Keith heard a pained grunt and the sound of electricity surging. It suddenly went eerily quiet.

"Lance? Pidge?" He asked, panic rising in his chest. There was no reply. "What's going on?" Keith tried his best to ignore the panic building in his chest. The green and blue paladins remained silent.

Keith felt his pulse quicken. Something had happened. What had happened?

Keith reached out onto his console, switching communication to Shiro. "Shiro. Are you there?"

Silence. He tried again but he was met by more silence.

He switched his comms back. "Lance. Pidge. Tell me what's happening!" He begged.

Nothing.

He didn't know what to do. He was meant to stay where he was and distract the drones but there were no drones anymore. He was useless out here flying around in circles. Inside the base he could be more helpful but he wasn't strong yet, he could get himself into trouble and then that would just mean more work for the others.

"Shit!" He yelled, flooring his lion's accelerator pedal. He steered red toward the back entrance where Lance and Pidge had first entered. He'd made his decision.

Without a second thought he exited his lion and ran for the hole in the wall. His legs were unsteady beneath him but as long as he kept up momentum he could hold his balance.

Keith brought up a map of the base which appeared on the visor of his helmet. He located the control room where Lance and Pidge had been and sprinted through the hallways.

He didn't even think about himself, just pushed onward. His teammates were in trouble. He needed to hurry.

Keith felt the swell of panic expand in his chest. This must have been how Lance had felt all those months ago when Keith had told him not to come back.

He'd been running and calling for him. Keith had heard him but decided to ignore him, hoping Lance would give up on him and just go. How could he even think that?
It made sense now, why Lance had gone back for him. There was no way in hell Keith would have left Lance behind if their positions had been switched, and there was no way he'd leave him behind now.

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Lance let out an irritated huff. His muscles hurt and the cuffs around his hands were extremely restraining and uncomfortable. He wondered if their kidnappers were treating Pidge any better. He hoped they were.

One of the Galra soldiers paced back and forth in front of Lance, gun held tight across his chest. He'd only been chained up for ten minutes and already he was getting bored with this guy's pacing.

"So... Are you guys just going to leave me locked up here forever or is there another part to your plan?" As soon as Lance's mouth had opened he had every gun in the room pointed at his head. He'd find it funny if he wasn't so concerned. They'd already tasered him once today, he'd rather not go through that again.

None of them answered him so Lance decided to try something else. "You're not calling for Zarkon, are you?" Lance asked dramatically concerned. He knew that they had called for Zarkon because they'd said it in front of him at least ten times. "I don't think Zarkon would appreciate it if you brought him all the way here just for two paladins. I mean, you don't even have any of the lions."

The soldier in front of him, he seemed to be the commander here, stopped for a moment and his eyes widened in shock. He looked toward a pair of drones for a moment and then back at Lance.

"He's right." The Galra said. "Zarkon will be disappointed if we don't find any lions for him. We must stop him from coming until we find the lions!"

Lance quirked a confused eyebrow, well that had been easy. If only all the Galra soldiers were this dumb..

The commander quickly turned to his drones and called out a few orders before walking out the door.

Lance waited for a moment, trying to figure out a way to escape. If the commander got a message out in time that meant avoiding a firefight with Zarkon but it was no use if he couldn't get to his lion before the Galra did.

Two of the drones turned to the door, their guns cocked at an unknown person and Lance thought- Hey, maybe Pidge got away and she's coming back for me. -but, no. Lance saw a flash of red armour and his stomach did a quadruple backflip. What on earth was Keith doing here?

Keith quickly nailed one of the drones with his sword just as the other two started shooting. He activated his shield and held it in front of him. As he assessed the situation he caught a glimpse of Lance and his face seemed to falter into a look of relief.

Lance shook his head at him and tried his best at portraying an 'are you insane?!' expression. It mustn't have been good enough because Keith just smirked at him. This was the Keith that he'd initially fallen in love with. Strong-headed, cocky and hot. And stupid.

Lance was going to go off at him later because running into a Galra occupied base was one thing but, running into a Galra occupied base on a pair of legs that had barely gotten used to walking, with
no back up and the agenda to start a fight was a whole different type of crazy.

So, yes, he would give Keith a lecture about idiocy later on but for now he would watch him kick some ass.

Keith pulled out his knife and threw it across the room. The knife lodged straight into the second soldiers chest and it immediately crumpled to the floor, its blaster toppling out of its hand and coming to rest just to the left of Lance.

Damn that was skilful. Lance couldn't understand how Keith just did those things with minimal effort.

Lance suddenly felt like he was the damsel in distress and Keith was his knight in shining armour. He quickly dismissed that thought.

Now that he wasn't being shot at from all angles, Keith activated his bayard and took on the final soldier. He lowered his shield and took a swing at the soldier. Unfortunately, he missed. The momentum of the swing knocked him off balance and the soldier took the opportunity to kick him halfway across the room.

He hit the ground with a heavy thud but was surprising back into motion in less than a second. The only problem was that he'd dropped his bayard somewhere between standing and hitting the floor.

Lance watched in concern as he scrambled away from the soldiers advance. Lance turned to stare at the previous soldiers discarded gun that lay only a few feet away.

"Keith." He yelled, stretching his leg out to kick the gun. Keith turned just as the gun slid into reach and without hesitation he picked it up and fired. The soldier halted and quickly dropped to the floor.

Lance let out a sigh of relief.

Keith carefully made his way across the room to find his bayard. Once he'd retrieved it he crouched in front of Lance on the floor and took off his helmet so that he could get a good look at him.

"Are you okay?" He asked.

"Am I okay? You're the one who just got kicked halfway across the room." Lance would have added a lot more hand movements just for dramatic effect but his hands were kind of cuffed to the ground.

Keith ignored him anyway. "Please never do that again." He said sternly. Lance could tell by the way he was staring at him that Keith was completely serious. "You scared the shit out of me."

Lance blinked a couple of times before a genuine smile tugged at his lips. Keith had been worried about him. How sweet.

Keith looked down and started inspecting the cuffs wrapped around Lance's wrists. He tugged at them gently.

"It's not my fault, Pidge is the one who hit the button." Lance offered. He flinched when Keith brought his sword down on the chain that connected his cuffs to a little loop in the ground. The handcuffs popped open and Lance rubbed at his free wrists.

"That's not what I mean." Keith replied and he was looking at Lance with that same intense stare as before. Lance stared back with equal intensity.
Once again he felt the urge to kiss this boy in front of him. He didn't care how he kissed him or whether it was just on the cheek or if it was on the lips. He really wanted to kiss him.

"If I wanted to kiss you right now.." Lance said cautiously. He kept his eyes focused on Keith. "Would you tell me not to?"

Keith was silent for a few ticks. An almost unnoticeable blush settled on his cheeks and his lips curled into a smile. Lance was sure he'd never seen anything so beautiful.

Then Keith was leaning in. He closed his eyes just before their lips connected and Lance's brain went into a frenzy. He completely forgot to close his own eyes and instead just sat there, unmoving while Keith planted one on him.

It was a quick kiss, only lasting about a second but Lance could feel the warm sensation of Keith's mouth pressed against his own for a few extra seconds afterwards. He clumsily lifted his hand to his lips, had he just...?

Keith's expression turned to an apologetic horror. "I'm sorry I thought-"

Lance reached out and grabbed him by the collar of his armour, pulling him closer so that he could kiss him properly this time. Keith gasped as their lips connected again but they both melted into the kiss instantly. This time Lance remembered to close his eyes.

Lance was still holding onto Keith's collar, grounding himself as their mouth's moved against each other.

Holy crap he had dreamt of this for so long, but his dreams weren't even half as good as the real thing. Lance shuddered as Keith's hand made its way to cup Lance's face. His lips were slightly chapped but still soft against Lance's own.

Lance tried to focus on kissing Keith but it was incredibly hard to do that when they wouldn't stop laughing. It was clumsy and awkward but still nice.

Realising it was useless, Lance pulled away and resorted to leaning his head onto Keith's shoulder. "Man, I've been wanting to do that for such a long time."

"Why the hell did you not do it earlier." Keith scoffed.

Lance sat back and stared at him deadpan. "Why didn't you do it earlier?" It all seemed so stupidly obvious now that Lance looked back on their little game of back and forth. They both felt the exact same way about each other and had done so for quite a long time. Lance had been deprived of this all because both of them were too stubborn to admit. It was honestly ridiculous.

Keith stood, ignoring his question but it didn't matter, Lance had already figured out the answer. "Come on. We gotta go find Pidge." He urged, pulling at Lance's hand.

Lance obliged. He stood, letting go of Keith's hand momentarily so that he could recover his stolen helmet and bayard. He shoved the helmet back on his head as Keith extracted his dagger from one of the crumpled soldiers chest plates.

"Do you know where they took her?" Keith asked as they ran side by side through the long corridor. Lance still had a smile plastered on his face but he bit it down. No, he wasn't allowed to be happy yet, they still had to find Pidge.

"Kind of.." Lance replied he took a left turn, reaching for Keith's hand to steer him in the right
He didn't get to finish his sentence as he was cut off by a voice over the comms. It was Shiro. "Keith. Where are you?"

Shiro must have opened the communications to everyone because both Lance and Keith seemed to have gotten the same message.

"Looking for Pidge." Keith replied, following Lance down the next corridor. "Her and Lance got caught. I found Lance but we're still looking for-"

Lance felt a small body slam into him as he rounded the next corner and he landed flat on his ass.

"Pidge!" Lance yelped. He'd dragged her down with him and the green paladin was now splayed out on top of him.

"Lance?" Pidge asked, confused. Then she lifted her head to look over him. "Keith?"

"Pidge?" Keith asked. "How'd you get away?"

Pidge promptly extracted herself from Lance, not offering to help him up. Rude. Lance hauled himself up onto his feet.

Pidge shrugged. "I just used my brain." She answered smugly.

"Okay, Nerd. Just know that your brain is the thing that got us caught in the first place." Lance pointed out.

"You told me to push the button." Pidge complained. "Oh, by the way. While you were playing damsel in distress, I was busy extracting the information. There was no need to press the button in the first place."

Lance huffed. "Yeah yeah. Whatever, can we get out of here now?"

"Shiro. We found Pidge. Are the villagers all safe?" Keith asked over the comms.

"Everyone's safe. Get to your lions so we can destroy this base."

"Yes sir." Keith replied. He turned toward Lance with a shy smile. Lance's posture softened and he smiled back.

Lance could have stood there all day staring if it weren't for Pidge. She looked back and forth between them. "Uh... okay?" Then she started shoving them both back the way they came. "Let's get moving."

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"She's just over that hill there." Lance pointed to the left at a large grassy hill. They were in the red lion's cockpit, Lance was catching a lift to his own lion which he'd stashed a couple of miles away, out of sight from the Galra.

Seeing as the green lion was the only one with cloaking Pidge had given him a lift over to the base so that they could get in undetected, Keith offered to give him a lift back.
Keith steered his own lion over the hill and sure enough, the blue lion was sitting there in all its blue space cat glory. He guided red downward and landed just beside the blue lion.

"Good, now get out." Keith said sarcastically. He turned to grin at Lance who was pouting.

"Don't I get a goodbye kiss?" He asked, putting little effort into his puppy dog eyes. It was cute, Lance was cute but not cute enough to get what he wanted.

"Maybe afterwards, we've gotta go help the others." Keith gave him a pointed look which would have been much more effective if he wasn't smiling.

Honestly, Keith didn't think his smile had faltered once since Lance had kissed him that second time. He was giddy with excitement and joy, it seemed like Lance felt the same.

"Fine." Lance complained but his pout quickly turned into a mischievous grin. He placed his own helmet aside before tugging at Keith's to get it off.

Once he was free of his helmet, Keith felt a pair of warm lips press against his cheek and then Lance dumped the helmet back on his head and was walking toward the exit. "Go kick some ass, babe!" Lance called over his shoulder. "I'll be there in a minute."

Keith's face burned red. Lance couldn't just do that. How was that in any way fair on Keith. "Babe? Really?" He called after Lance.

"Of course, babe."

Keith bit back a smile and took off once Lance was at a safe enough distance away from red's boosters.

"You're so lame." Keith murmured over a private communication line. Then he switched back to the group communication and steered his lion back over the hill toward the base, his cheeks still blushing uncontrollably.

Chapter End Notes

Finally! I hope you enjoyed this chapter, bet you thought they'd never confess. Alas they did and the dorks are finally together and everyone is happy, hooray!

Next chapter hopefully won't take as long but I'm pretty sure I said that about this chapter so we'll see what happens.

As usual, let me know what you thought of this chapter and thank you to everyone who is supporting this fic and leaving lovely messages. I love you all!
Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

I’m so so sorry that this is so late. I just couldn’t write for like.. a month. If you didn’t notice I changed the amount of chapters in this story and so this is the last chapter. I really hope you enjoy this chapter :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Okay, so I am your boyfriend?" Lance asked quietly. The yard was almost full of people and aliens alike and though everyone here was his ally, Lance didn't want them hearing his business.

Technically they should be having this conversation somewhere more private but they were expected to stay here for the celebration and Lance didn't want the locals to think he was disrespecting all the effort they'd put into throwing this party.

Keith pursed his lips. "Why, you wanna be my girlfriend instead?" He sat adjacent to Lance on one of the village's many wooden benches, keeping a respectable distance between them as not to arouse suspicion.

They were outside in an area that could only be described as a courtyard. It was huge in comparison to any other courtyard Lance had seen.

Surrounding the yard was a tall white bricked building that wrapped almost all the way round in a 'U' shape. The fourth side of the court yard was framed by several tall arches. Thin vines sprouted from the base of each arch and wrapped around the marble-like stone. The architecture in this little village was breathtaking, Lance wished they could stay longer and check everything out.

Lance's eyes drifted away from the scenery and landed on Keith's smug face. "You know what I mean." He replied.

Keith contemplated Lance's words for a moment before nodding slowly. "If it's what you want then yeah, i'd like that too."

Lance's face etched into an easy smile as he stared at the boy in front of him. Boyfriend. It was official, Keith was his boyfriend and if that wasn't the most satisfying thought Lance had ever had then he didn't know what was.

Keith had the same happy smile on his own face and Lance's heart melted a little. Keith's hair was tousled and messy and his eyes were just starting to show signs of tiredness but he stilled looked just as handsome as ever and Lance revelled in the fact that he had a hot boyfriend. His sisters had always taunted him, saying he’d never find a girlfriend. He couldn’t wait to take Keith home and flaunt. They would be sooo jealous.

"Do you wanna go somewhere?" Lance asked, flicking his eyes toward one of the arches. His previous thoughts of disrespecting their hosts were gone. He wanted to be somewhere more comfortable where they wouldn't have to monitor every word in fear of being caught out. Lance wanted to be able to touch his boyfriend too, nothing over the top, he just wanted to hold his hand or just anything that wasn’t this metre of space dividing them. They'd been hanging around here for
long enough to let the locals know that they appreciated the party, now Lance wanted to go for a
walk with his new boyfriend. If their hosts had a problem with that then they could keep it to
themselves.

"Lead the way, hot stuff." Keith replied sarcastically, making sure to keep his voice at level only they
could hear. Lance grabbed Keith’s hand and hauled him up. Keith followed him past the crowds of
people and through one of the archways. Once they were out of sight Lance stopped to lace their
fingers together.

"Hot stuff?" Lance smirked before leading Keith slowly down the street.

Keith shrugged. "It's payback for you calling me babe earlier."

Lance rolled his eyes. "Babe is endearing." He argued. "Hot stuff is the kind of name you'd call your
sexy-stripper-side hoe."

"Then I guess you'll just have to be my sexy-stripper-side hoe from now on."

Lance chuckled. "Sure. I can do that for you, babe."

Keith bumped him in the shoulder playfully. "Maybe later."

They lapsed into a comfortable silence for a while, taking in the scenery. It was dark out on the
abandoned streets. Everyone was either back at the party or sleeping in their homes so there was
really no need for streetlights at this point in time. Their only source of light came from the
surprisingly luminescent moon above them. It was enough to illuminate the path ahead as they
strolled onwards, taking in the atmosphere.

"You know, I thought you hated me for so long." Keith huffed out a laugh, he was staring straight
ahead as they made their way through the street. "I remember wondering what the hell I'd done
wrong to make you hate me so much."

Lance turned his head slightly to look at him. He had his head down, a light smile on his lips. "I
never actually hated you. I just.. I always thought you were perfect and it would really piss me off."
Lance smiled, remembering what it had been like. He could laugh about it now but back then it
would drive him crazy. "You were like the garrison golden boy. Perfect grades, perfect pilot, perfect
student. I was jealous. And of course, it was so much worse because I found you incredibly
attractive."

Keith was blushing hard now. It was funny how easily Lance could get him blushing. Just a small
compliment and Keith would start burning up like the sun.

"What made you change your mind?" Keith asked curiously, he was still blushing like crazy.

Lance shrugged. "Well, as it turns out, I stopped blaming you for being so cool, long enough to
figure out how lame you actually are."

"So, what you're saying is... you only like me because you think I'm lame."

"Yeah pretty much." Lance deadpanned.

"In that case, I like you because you're lame too." Keith confirmed. "...And you're caring and on the
rare occasion you're actually funny and sometimes I find you attractive."

Keith spoke sarcastically but Lance knew that he really meant it, the sarcasm was just his way of
keeping things casual. Keith had never been the type to get sappy over people but Lance was sure he could lighten him up a little. Lance had to agree with the last part though. Damn right he was attractive.

Keith's eyes dropped to the ground, suddenly shy. He stopped dead in the middle of the street, pulling Lance back with him. "I never thanked you.. for everything you've done for me."

Lance's chest tightened slightly. Sure, Keith had never verbally thanked him but he had thanked him in so many other ways.

"I'm serious. You don't understand how much you've helped me in these last few months. I just want you to know that I appreciate it. Everything."

A smile tugged on Lance's lips. "I know." He squeezed Keith's hand, causing him to flush again. "You know, there's another way you can thank me." He raised a suggestive eyebrow and Keith smirked.

After little hesitation the space between them closed. Lance's fingers found their way to Keith's hair immediately, dark locks catching on his fingertips. He felt a hand on his shoulder and another in his own hair.

They moved slowly backwards until Keith was pressed against the wall. Lance pressed his body closer, making as much physical contact as he possibly could. All he knew was Keith’s mouth moving against his own and his roaming hands on his back.

It was more intimate this time. Each movement longer and deeper. Better.

Lance's tongue started to roam adventurously when Keith made this noise. It was quiet and almost went undetected but some part of Lance's conscience managed to latch onto that noise and only then did he realise what he was doing.

He, a paladin of Voltron, was currently making out with Keith, a fellow paladin of Voltron, on a random planet in a random street. Just down the road there was a diplomatic celebration happening, where Allura was currently attempting to form an alliance with a bunch of random aliens.

It wasn't their best idea.

Lance pulled away. He didn't want to but he felt it was necessary. Keith searched his face, confused by the sudden lack of contact.

"We should probably do this somewhere more private." Lance explained.

Keith had the decency to get at least slightly flustered but it didn't last long. He grabbed Lance by the hand and they ran back the way they'd come, headed for the castle. Both eager to get back to what they'd been doing.

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Keith's fingertips wandered curiously over the material of Lance’s thin shirt, mind drifting in a million directions but always seeming to come back to one thing. One person.

Of course it was hard not to think about someone when their hands were messing up your hair and you could feel their heart thumping right next to your ear and especially when they won’t stop talking either.
“So you tell me to shut up because you’re ‘too tired’ and yet instead of sleeping, which is usually something you do when you’re tired, you just decide to lay there and stare at the wall.”

Keith let out a long, tiresome sigh. Making sure to add as much irritation as he could in the hopes that Lance would realise that he was, in fact, tired. It had been a long day and Keith was both mentally and physically drained. Unlike Keith, Lance didn’t at all seemed fazed by the days events. Once they’d snuck back into the castle they’d had their ‘bonding time’ as Lance had called it and now Keith was done. He wanted to sleep. Lance had other plans apparently. “It’s hard to do that when you keeping talking every five seconds.” He grumbled.

“Man, you sure are a grumpy pants when it’s past your bedtime.” He seemed relatively unaffected by Keith’s complaining. Keith wondered if they had any duct tape in the castle. “Here’s the deal, I’ll shut up if you tell me what you’re thinking about.”

“No. The deal was, you shut up and let me sleep. Stick to that deal.”

“I’ll stick to the deal when you stop staring at my bedroom wall like it’s hiding all the secrets to the mhmph-”

Keith’s hand slapped over Lance’s mouth without him even having to move that much. Cutting him off in an instant. Keith relished the short moments of silence until Lance figured out a new way to annoy him. Persistent fingers jabbed at his face and stomach until Keith was forced to take his hand away from Lance’s mouth. Lance’s jabbing, unfortunately, continued accompanied by the question “What are you thinking about?” Being repeated in his ear.

Keith pushed himself upright, if only to get away from Lance’s annoying jabs. He started crawling over Lance stomach to escape and hopefully leave the room but Lance wrapped his arms around Keith’s waist and pulled him down, with minimal effort Keith was pinned down on the mattress, Lance propped on his chest, victorious.

“Laaaaaaaance.” Keith whined. He tried desperately to wriggle free but Lance had the upper hand on this one. There was no escape. Lance continued to playfully prod at him and Keith managed to glare incredulously up until Lance started poking him in the face. The irritating poking tugged his lips slightly upward and once Lance noticed the slight smile, it was all over. Once the excitement of a possible win began gleaming in Lance’s eyes, Keith no longer stood a chance. He tried his best but eventually conceded, chuckling and squirming away from Lance’s intrusive fingers.


It infuriated Keith how easily Lance could sway his mood. One minute Lance was throwing insults at him and pissing him right off, the next he was doing stupid things that made Keith laugh. Lance had too much power over him.

“Get off me asshat.” Keith shoved him again and this time Lance flopped off of him only to latch back onto him seconds later. Lance had managed to arrange them so that he now had his chest pressed right up against Keith’s back and his arm around his torso, snuggling him like a human teddy bear.

Keith sighed again because, ‘of course he was the little spoon in this scenario’ but he couldn’t bring himself to care all that much because Lance had finally shut up. Maybe, just maybe, if he didn’t say anything Lance would stay quiet and Keith could actually think or maybe manage to get some sleep.

After a few moments he realised that Lance probably wouldn’t give up that easily. “I was wondering,” he started. “Whether we should tell the others about this.”
Lance hummed in satisfaction, knowing that Keith’s confession meant that he’d won. “They’ll find out eventually anyway.” He answered into the back of Keith’s hair.

“I know.” Keith sighed. “But should we tell them or should we let them figure it out?”


“I don’t know. I just-” Keith hesitated. “What if it was like.. Hunk and Pidge who were hiding something like this from the rest of us. You’d want to know, wouldn’t you.”

“Yeah. I’d want to know eventually but I’d respect their privacy.”

“Okay, but if we tell them we won’t have to sneak around like a pair of weirdos all the time.” Keith suggested.

“Hey, if you want to tell them so badly then go right ahead. I won’t stop you, but consider this, Mr honest; what are you going to say?”

Keith opened his mouth but found that he, in fact, had no way of answering that question. Honestly, he’d kind of been hoping Lance would be the one to tell everybody. He’d expected him to either run around the castle screaming it at the top of his lungs or at least brag to Hunk and maybe Pidge. Apparently he’d misjudged him. Keith couldn’t think of any situation that wouldn’t turn out awkward if he was the one to bear this news.

He let out a huff. “You’ve got a point.. but I’m not dropping this.”

“Okay, well, how about we both shut up now and pick this back up in the morning? We’ll even tell them tomorrow if that makes you feel better.” Lance suggested. Keith felt him readjust himself once more before settling.

“Finally.” Keith sighed, content with the familiar quiet buzz of the castle and Lance’s even breathing. Tomorrow. He allowed himself to relax and eventually drifted into sleep.

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Keith woke up feeling like a criminal. Why did he feel like a criminal? Well, first of all, he woke up next to the most beautiful boy in the universe. There was obviously something illegal about that. Secondly, said boy was staring at him with the goofiest, sweetest smile Keith had ever been so lucky to witness.

Maybe Lance was the criminal. There had to be some kind of law against ambushing people with cuteness this early in the morning. Keith felt betrayed.

“Morning.” Lance chirped, never dropping that sweet smile. He was perched on one elbow staring down at Keith curiously.

Keith felt his cheeks momentarily heat up as he mumbled his greeting. “Good morning.”

Then Lance flopped on top of him, rolling onto his back like a needy cat. Lance’s boney spine dug into Keith’s belly, causing him to flinch reflexively. Unsurprisingly, Lance whined as Keith shoved him off.

“Why d’you never give me any love.” Lance pouted, throwing a mini tantrum on the mattress.

Keith pounced on top of him to stop him from fumbling around. “Because..” he whispered, nose
only millimeters from Lance’s. He lifted his hand to caress the other boy’s high cheekbones. “You’re annoying.” And then he kissed him on the nose and Lance started squealing like a little girl, babbling on about how cute his boyfriend was.

Keith chuckled, burying his face in Lance’s chest as he waited for the latter to settle down. He felt warm and comfortable against Lance’s chest, breathing in his musky scent. It was nice. He was happy.

Everything was good and calm until the door slid open unexpectedly and they both froze. Keith could feel the tension in Lance muscles as he slowly lifted his head to see what was happening.

Allura, in all her gracious glory, stood by the door with a hand over her mouth and eyes as wide as dish plates. Keith blames himself for not telling the others or at least leaving a sign on the door saying ‘do not disturb because now things were a little less comfortable.

“I’m sorry- I..” was that amusement in Allura’s voice. Keith suddenly felt like a deer in the headlights. He was just thankful that he’d decided to keep his pants on last night. Lance, however. And now Allura was laughing at them and slowly backing out of the room. “I’ll just leave..” she chuckled.

The door slid shut and the two of them were left staring at each other in horror.

“PIDGE!” The sudden ringing of Allura’s call set Lance into action.

“Oh hell no.” He growled, promptly flipping Keith off of him and onto the mattress. He seemed to sense that this was rude and apologised by kissing him on the cheek. Within a second he was running for his discarded jeans on the floor. He pulled them on and ran out the door and down the hallway, screaming at the top of his lungs. “Allura don’t you dare tell Pidge!” Keith just watched, not completely sure what was happening.

“PIDGE YOU’RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE THIS!” Allura’s voice echoed from the other end of the hallway and was instantly followed by a screeching Lance and Hunk yelling about everybody yelling.

Then, in an even better turn of events Shiro was standing at Lance’s doorway, peering in at Keith “Oh, hey Keith what’s- ...” His mouth dropped into an ‘O’ shape and Keith’s face went about ten shades pinker as the realisation hit. “Uhhh- w.-“

Keith buried himself under the bed sheets and pillows, willing himself to disintegrate.

Pidge could be heard through his bedsheet barrier. A high pitched “I KNEW IT.” Dealt the final blow and Keith basically died under those sheets, listening to Lance’s squawking and the girls cackling and god knows where Shiro went because they all knew now and Keith couldn’t be more relieved or embarrassed.

Just when Keith thought it couldn’t get any worse Lance ran back in and dove under the covers. They both sat there under their bedsheet tent, listening to the chaos that ensued outside until Lance decided to fill him in on what had happened. “Pidge is coming up with theories. Also, apparently Pidge and Allura made bets and Allura owes Pidge ten space-dollars. Plus, Shiro and Hunk know too.”

Keith groaned, dropping his head in his hands. It wasn’t supposed to happen like this. They were supposed to tell them today and was going to easy and calm. Not this.

“This is fine.” Lance said, deadpan. “We’ll just stay here for a couple days until everyone calms
Keith chuckled and then he let out a snort and Lance started laughing and they just sat there laughing at nothing. Both majorly embarrassed about the mornings events but also happy that they were under that bedsheet, in Lance’s room, on an alien ship, floating in space, together.

They were together.

Chapter End Notes

*Throws laptop* ITS FINISHED!

Before you leave this story behind and never come back, I just want to thank everyone who supported me through the process of writing this damn fic. Whether it was kudo’s, comments, bookmarks or even just reading the damn thing, you guys are the reason I kept writing and I’m really thankful for that.

Before I leave, I just wanted to let you know you can hit me up on other social media’s if you just want to chat about these two gay dorks or ask any questions or whatever. Btw I might start writing another fic eventually so stay tuned for that :)

Instagram: @immiams
Twitter: @immiamsart

Anyway, thanks so much for your support and you’re all amazing!

Byeeeee!

End Notes

So you made it to the end of the chapter, thanks for reading. If you liked this chapter please let me know. If you have any criticism you're welcome to comment too (please, nothing too harsh)

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!